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THE GUNBOAT BOYS; OR, HARRY AND ARTIE AMONG THE GUERRILLAS.

By ARTHUR A. RANKIN.



ARTIE SPRUNG UPON THE PROSTRATE GUERRILLA THE INSTANT HE REACHED
THE GROUND.

HARRY AND ARTIE;

—OR,—

AMONG THE GUERRILLAS.

BY A. RANKIN.

CHAPTER I.

STIRRING TIMES.

The sun was just setting beyond the village one evening early in the year 1861, when a heavily-built, portly youth emerged from the little railroad station and walked rapidly up the street. A minute or two after he left the station a man came hastily out of it, and pinned a bit of paper on the wall, seemingly to attract the attention of the passers-by.

Our portly youth did not stop to learn the contents of the paper—he well knew it, but continued his gait, occasionally breaking into a run, as if stimulated by the utmost excitement.

At length, when he reached a turn in the street, he increased his pace to the top of his speed, directing his steps toward a modest little house set back some little distance from the road.

He sprung over the low fence with an ease and grace that showed his weight was well supported by good solid muscle.

A minute later he entered the door of the house without ceremony.

The room he entered had a single occupant, a youth about his own age, who was lying on a sofa.

"Hullo, Artie!" he cried, raising himself on one arm; "your face is full of news. What's going on in the sleepy old town? Nothing wrong down home again, is there?" he added anxiously, noticing that Artie paid no attention to his rapid questions.

"Oh, no," replied Artie; "but I'll tell you what," he continued, springing up and coming close to the sofa, "they have gone and done it."

"Who? What?" demanded the other, astonished and fully aroused at the excited and abrupt manner of his companion.

At this moment the sound of a bass drum, beaten violently and without regard to time, reached their ears. The same sound reached them an instant later from a number of smaller drums.

Artie went to the window and stood looking out entranced, much to the disgust of his friend, who had yet been unable to learn the cause of the racket.

"Harry, I'll be back again this evening," said Artie, springing to the door.

"Come back here!" shouted Harry,

just as the door was closing. "What do you mean going off that way, and not telling me what all this fuss is about! Come," he said, impatiently, as Artie sat down again, "let me have it right away."

"Well, it seems to me you ought to guess," returned the other; "but if you can't, here it is: I was in the railroad station, a few minutes ago, and a message came over the telegraph that the rebels had fired on Fort Sumter, and that the Union garrison had surrendered."

Harry listened incredulously to this, and when he received the import of it he lay back on the sofa, and looked at his friend without speaking.

"I s'pose the message is all over town by this time, and that's what the noise means," added Artie.

"Just what I've been wishing for," cried Harry, rubbing his hands in delight, and not noticing Artie's last remark. "Ever since last fall," he went on, "I have wanted a chance to thrash those high handed fellows down there, and now we'll have it, sure. But," he continued, "did you say they surrendered?"

He had grown quite grave now.

"Yes," answered Artie; "so the message said; but how's your foot?"

"Oh, pretty nearly well. I'll be out in a few days, as well as ever," he answered, carelessly.

Harry was thinking of the news—such stunning news—that thrilled every person of the whole vast North.

Harry, cool and far-seeing beyond his years, felt that the struggle coming was to be a terrible one, and he already began to repent of his expressed satisfaction that war had really come. He plied Artie with questions, but as yet the news was meager, only the single brief message, conveying the unwelcome tidings that the United States had engaged in a war, and had already been defeated.

Every one knows how that defeat sat upon the feelings of the proud North.

Every fiber of her vast territory tingled with shame and anger, and above all with a desire that the South should be repaid in terrible principal and interest.

After a little more talk Artie started out to see what action was to be taken in the village, while Harry settled himself comfortably on his sofa, to think he matter all over again.

While the two friends were separated, we will take the opportunity of making the readers a little better acquainted with them.

Harry Phillips lived with his mother in the neat little house in which the preceding dialogue took place. His father

died about four years before, leaving his wife and son fairly provided for. Harry had been preparing for college, and expected to enter in the fall of the year of the opening of our story.

He and Arthur Linden were steadfast friends, though differing from each other in almost every respect. While Arthur was not, strictly speaking, portly, he inclined that way; on the other hand Harry was slender, though constant healthy exercise had made both as tough and wiry as gymnasts. Both were the same height—five feet eleven inches—both excelled in out-door pursuits, and Harry in school.

Arthur did not like school, and avoided as many lessons as possible. Though not a dull boy by any means, he was quite content to shamble along with any kind of an average, declaring that he did not have much brain, and that it wouldn't stretch.

Harry, who wielded an immense influence over him, always felt himself at a loss here. When he coaxed or threatened Arthur would merely laugh at him, and say: "You must hold up the intellectual end of the partnership." For these two were, so to speak, partners, and shared everything alike.

Arthur's home life was far from pleasant. His parents both died when he was small, and he was sent to live with his father's step-brother, who was appointed guardian.

This man was sordid and avaricious to the last degree.

His first wife loved the little boy, but when he was ten years she too died, and his guardian married a woman as mean and unscrupulous as himself.

What the children of the amiable pair were can be imagined; they continually were endeavoring to get Arthur into trouble, and they were the cause of fierce quarrels between him and his half-uncle.

He had long wished to leave so unpleasant a home, but his love for his friend, and other considerations, had induced him to stay there as a necessary evil.

About three weeks previous to the opening of this story, the two went squirrel hunting, and while crossing a gully Harry's leg slipped from the wet and slippery foot, which served as a bridge, and he fell into the rocky bed of a dry creek, about fifteen feet below. He tried to get up, but found he was unable to stand upon his left foot. Arthur coming up at the moment pronounced the hurt a sprain, and lifting him up carried him the distance of a mile, to the nearest house.

CHAPTER II.

OFF FOR THE WAR.

A week has passed. The whole country is in a fever of excitement and energy. The President has called for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion. Cities, towns and villages, Hammet among the rest, are making preparations to send volunteers to the scene of action.

Harry Phillips' foot is so much better that now he sits on the porch listening to his friend's excited remarks, as he lets fall intelligence received during the day. The two friends had fully decided that they would "go to war," and just at that time nobody could have persuaded them that their country could do without them in the pressing emergency.

Not a word had been said as yet requesting permission to go, but as soon as Harry's foot was entirely well no time was to be lost in making that move.

"Say, Artie, all this talk has been about my permission," said Harry suddenly. "Do you suppose it will be all right with you?"

A shade of bitterness crossed Arthur's face when he laughed, saying, "Oh, that will be all right. I'll just tell them I'm going. They'll be glad to be rid of me."

"Oh, I guess it isn't so bad as that," replied Harry, soothingly.

"Isn't it!" rejoined Arthur, warmly. "Why, they grudge the very food I eat as if it was so much money thrown away."

"Well, you will be soon out of their clutches whether they like it or not."

"I hope so," replied Arthur, grimly.

"I tell you what, Artie," said Harry, "come around to-night and I'll ask mother. I can't wait any longer, and when you go home suppose you ask your guard and see what he says."

About half-past seven Arthur opened the door of the Phillips house and walked into the same room in which we saw him on another occasion. Mrs. Phillips and her son were already there.

Mrs. Phillips, who was a tall, fine-looking woman, greeted Arthur pleasantly and said, "You and Harry must have some scheme in your heads. He has been expecting you for half an hour."

"I don't know whether you will call it a scheme or not, Mrs. Phillips, though whatever you call it I think you will hardly like it."

Mrs. Phillips turned her eyes on Arthur with a look of inquiry, when Harry broke in with, "Now, see here, Artie, if you are going to talk that way you had better keep quiet. I can do better than that myself."

"Well, go ahead," replied Arthur, good-humoredly.

"Well, mother, it is this. We want to join the army right away."

Mrs. Phillips gave a slight start, and elevated her brows a little, but otherwise seemed unaffected. She simply said: "You are foolish, Harry; you don't know what you ask."

"What are your objections?" he asked.

"I didn't say I had any objections," she replied.

This was the beginning of a long argument which lasted for several hours without coming to any definite result.

Two weeks later our heroes stepped aboard a small Ohio steamer en route to Cairo, which was a great mustering-ground during the late war.

They had no definite plans—they did not know whether they would be assigned to army or navy service.

Mrs. Phillips had given in to her son only after repeated and strong arguments, while as Arthur predicted he had no trouble in getting the consent of his guardian.

When we see our friends again it is on a Mississippi River gun boat, the Dragon Fly, some months later. During the time passed the first bugle-call of the war had been forgotten in the greater events which quickly followed.

The people of the North as reverse after reverse struck them only became more determined that the rebellion should be subdued.

After the first few months of fierce excitement and novelty passed by things settled into the groove of steady perseverance on both sides, that nothing short of absolute submission on the one side and the acknowledgment of their independence on the other side could move.

We must, however, go quickly to our story. Harry and Arthur were put through the exhaustive drills and exercises which every one on a war vessel must go through.

Under the eyes of watchful superiors it was quickly ascertained in what our heroes excelled and how they could be made the most capable.

Arthur's ready knowledge of fire-arms was so marked that it promised for him the position of commander of one of the guns, while Harry had so completely perfected himself in the knowledge of the different kinds of ammunition that he was given charge of the magazine of the gun-boat.

The commander of the Dragon Fly, Captain Chewes, a man of shrewd observance, had already noted particularly his two subalterns and told himself that

were they spared to the service great things would come of them.

Nor was he mistaken.

At this time the Confederates held the Mississippi as far up as Memphis, and it was the purpose of the United States to open up the river for several reasons unnecessary to mention here.

Life was very monotonous on the Dragon Fly, which lay in the river unable to descend the stream on account of the enemy's ships.

One day as the boat slowly steamed from shore to shore, Harry came to Arthur and sat down on the deck.

"Artie," he said, with a sigh of relief, "we may have a chance to get away from here for a few hours."

"What's going on?" asked Arthur, eagerly.

"I understand that the captain has received information that there is a band of guerillas about ten miles back in the country who are up to all sorts of mischief, and from the way in which he spoke to Mr. Flack, the first lieutenant, I believe he is going to make a raid on them."

"Who is he going to take?" asked Arthur, with interest.

"That's just what nobody knows," replied Harry. "He may take the first company or the second or he may ask for volunteers."

"He won't be likely to take all the force, then, you think?"

"Certainly not—somebody has got to take care of the ship."

"Who do you suppose could harm this gun-boat?" asked Arthur, scornfully.

"There's no telling. Anyway, it would never do to leave it with only half a dozen men aboard."

"Is there any chance for us to go with the party?" asked Arthur, returning to the subject.

"I'll tell you how we'll fix it. In case he don't ask for volunteers and orders off a company, we'll go up and ask him if he can't make a place for us in the party."

Just then Harry was called away and Arthur himself set about something that kept him busy till the evening mess.

Immediately it was over the order came to muster out the first company. In a few seconds it was standing in orderly attitude before the captain, beside whom was Mr. Flack, the first lieutenant.

Captain Chewes addressed a few words to them, instructing them to obey implicitly the commands of Lieutenant Flack. "That is all, my lads," he said in conclusion, "except that I expect you to render a good account to me when you return."

At this moment Harry advanced, with cap in hand, Arthur immediately following.

"What is it, lads?" asked the captain.

"We would like to accompany the expedition, sir, if you have no objection," replied Harry.

"I guess there is enough in the party already. I dare not send too many."

Harry touched his cap and stepped back deeply disappointed.

The captain noticed the look, and appeared to meditate.

"The success of the expedition may depend on the caution of such a steady young fellow as he," he said to himself; then aloud, "I think, after all, you two may go—and learn as much as you can about the county," he added, as he turned away.

Harry and Arthur thanked him, and set about preparing themselves.

They were to start as soon as it was fairly dark, and carry only light weapons. Harry and Arthur provided themselves with two navy revolvers each, and waited impatiently for the order to start.

CHAPTER III.

A CAPTURE.

It was about nine o'clock when the boats put off from the Dragon Fly, and headed for the Missouri shore.

It was very cloudy, and so dark that had there been no guide it would have been impossible to find the rendezvous of the guerillas.

The party numbered thirty-three, including the first lieutenant, who commanded, and Harry and Arthur. The guide was a recruit from Missouri, who was entirely familiar with the country, and easily recognized the house in which, according to the captain's information, the guerilla band was congregated.

The information received by the captain—and unfortunately he did not know whether it was trustworthy or not—said there were very few guerillas at the house at present, but that later on there would be more. So if the raid was to be made, it should be made at once.

As soon as a landing was effected the utmost silence was enjoined, in order that if any enemy was near their presence would not be noticed.

The guide took the lead, and boldly plunged into the shrubbery, which grew thickly along the bank.

The rest of the party followed closely in double file, with Harry and Arthur bringing up the rear.

After moving at a rapid walk for about an hour, Harry whispered: "Artie, this business don't look right to me."

"Why not?" asked Arthur, in a whisper.

"Because we have no guide, but one of our own men. Suppose the news is all false, what's to prevent us being led into an ambush?"

"Do you suppose Andrews, our guide, would lead us into an ambush?" asked Arthur, in an indignant whisper.

"That's not what I mean," answered Harry. "It's this—the captain got information; where did he get it? He don't know. It might have been from these very guerillas. They might tell just how to get to their place, and say there was no force there; then they could run into the country and get up a gang, and be all ready for us. Don't you see?"

"I see what you mean," said Arthur; "but there is no telling. The information might be true."

"It might, but I doubt it," replied Harry.

They had been marching steadily for about two hours, and had come about eight miles.

If accounts were true the guerilla's house was about two miles further on.

Here the lieutenant called a halt.

"I think, Andrews," he said to the guide, "you had better go ahead and see what things look like."

"I think we had all better go closer," suggested Andrews. "You see, sir," he said, addressing Lieutenant Flack, "it would take me an hour to go there and back, and that would bring us to twelve o'clock; then it would take us a half hour to go there from here, and if anything would happen to keep us here after daylight it might be a long time till we see the Mississippi again."

As this was unquestionably the most sensible view of the question, the lieutenant gave in and the march was resumed.

After this extreme caution was used, and the next halt was made within view of the house.

The house itself could not be seen on account of the intense darkness, but here and there lights twinkled through half-shut or carelessly drawn curtains.

Andrews was about to say something, when all were startled by the sound of voices close by.

"Down! down! in the grass for your lives," whispered the lieutenant excitedly.

Luckily the grass was quite long, and they were fairly out of danger of discovery.

From their position all heard the following conversation:

"I tell you they're afeard to come. You say Cap Henry told us to be on hand. Well, we will be, but they'll be no Yanks, you bet."

This was said in a whining tone.

"Yas, they'll come," said another voice, "er less they're the tarnalest babies as ever claimed to carry shootin' iron."

"Did you say as how cap writ the Yank cap'n a letter?" asked the whining voice again.

"Tolable smart trick that; and he said he'd hev three hundred men in the house to-night, so if they did come he could take 'em all pris'ners. Tolable smart un, Cap Henry is, ain't he?"

"Well, let's go down to the house, to be there if the Yankees show theirselves," replied the other.

The sound of their footsteps soon died away on the grassy ground, and in a few minutes perfect silence reigned around.

"Men," said the lieutenant, springing up, "we can't be of use here. It is plain the captain of the Dragon Fly has been played with by these fellows, and the sooner we get out of this locality the better it will be for us."

This was a rather inglorious ending to the expedition, but no one had a right to complain.

On the way back Harry observed, as much as was possible in the pitchy darkness, the features of the country through which they were passing. It seemed that most of the route lay through a thinly-grown forest, except within a few miles of the river, where the land was cultivated.

The journey back was a little more stirring than the first.

They had scarcely left the house two miles behind, when they ran almost directly upon two men.

Andrews, being in the lead, collared one, and pressed his pistol against his head. "A word and you are dead," was all that this fellow needed.

The lieutenant had more trouble. He also seized his man by the collar, but before he could do any more he was promptly knocked down by a well-directed right-hander that struck him full between the eyes.

The two men behind, however, sprung upon the pugilistic Confederate, and with one at his throat and another holding both his arms, he was quickly brought to terms.

"An' who are you that stop honest men on the public highway? Ain't you from the shanty?" he demanded.

The lieutenant was too much dazed to reply, so Harry volunteered to answer his questions:

"We have been to the shanty," he said, supposing the man to mean the guerilla house.

"Waal, what d'ye mean ketchin' a fel-

ler up this here way?" demanded the man again, supposing a joke was being played on him by his friends.

"Oh, no," said Harry; "you are our prisoner, and we'll take you to our gunboat."

"Eh? You Yanks?" he ejaculated, greatly startled and alarmed.

"We belong to the United States Navy," replied Harry. "So you were one of the gang we paid a visit to to-night?" he added, hoping to gain some information about the plans of the guerillas.

"You were thar, were you?" asked the prisoner, who appeared to be greatly amazed.

"Yes, we were," said Harry, with a laugh. "You ought to see the place now."

"I b'l'ev'e you're lyin'," replied the prisoner, incredulously. "You'd a-never come away agin if you had ben thar."

"Well, we were there, as you could see if you were there," answered Harry.

"That was a fine trap you thought you laid for us. You thought you'd get us there and take us all prisoners, but you see we were too sharp for you."

Harry, while telling the truth altogether, had led the man to believe that the guerilla house had been visited and destroyed, and that their clever plan had been found out.

He now put the finishing touch on his work, by saying:

"Cap Henry couldn't write a smart enough letter to fool us."

The guerilla seemed to think everything known to this incomprehensible youth, but Harry was afraid to question him much, for fear of making a blunder.

By this time the lieutenant had so far recovered as to order the march to continue.

The two prisoners were secured between the men, and the march was again resumed.

It was two o'clock in the morning when they reached the Dragon Fly, and all were quite tired out by their profitless venture.

Harry's active mind had conceived a project on the march, which he was in haste to lay before the commander, notwithstanding his fatigue.

CHAPTER IV.

ON A MISSION.

The next morning, about nine o'clock, Harry and Arthur were ushered into the captain's presence.

"Well, lads," he said, briskly, as both saluted, "what now?"

"I suppose you know, captain, or, rather, you remember we were both on the expedition last night?" began Harry.

"Yes."

"And as the expedition was a failure, I thought it would not be wrong to lay before you a plan, by which I think we can get rid of those guerillas with very little loss of blood—possibly none."

"Ha!" exclaimed the captain, growing interested. "And how would you go about it?"

"That's just what I came to ask permission to do—burn them out," replied Harry.

"What is your purpose?" demanded the matter-of-fact captain.

Harry then explained in what manner he intended to proceed.

"How long do you expect this venture to occupy your time?" finally asked the captain.

"Two nights and one day, at the longest."

"When do you want to start?"

"The same time to-night as we started last night."

"How many men? I wouldn't like to trust any number in the territory just now."

"Just our two selves, sir," replied Harry. "We are used to each other, and have all sorts of secret signals, which nobody else would understand. The fewer men the better on an enterprise of this sort."

"You may go now," said the captain, abruptly. "I'll think the matter over."

Our heroes saluted and left the cabin.

"I tell you what," said Arthur, when they reached the deck, "there is no telling from what the captain says what he thinks."

"Just wait," said Harry, confidentially; "he's all right."

As the day wore on, however, the boys began to get anxious. Three o'clock came and went, with no summons from the captain.

Our heroes were together, in readiness to wait on him the instant he gave the order.

"We'll get ready to start, anyway, so as not to be delayed by the old man," said Harry.

The sun was just setting when Harry was again summoned to the cabin.

The captain, who was busily writing, laid down his pen as Harry, cap in hand, approached the table.

"I have questioned the prisoners you brought in last night, fully," he said, "and warned from them that this house is a rendezvous for guerillas of a territory at least one hundred miles square. If

such is the case I think I am justified in ordering you to proceed as you have suggested."

Harry bowed his thanks, and was withdrawing when the captain called after him:

"I tried to find out from the prisoners if there was any other gang they knew of on the west side of the river. Of course they told me no. Make that a particular object of your expedition, to find out where another one is. Now do your best, take care of yourself, and remember your name will go to Washington in the event of extraordinary service."

As Harry left the room the captain again called out: "I'll be on deck before you go."

"Very good, sir," replied our hero.

It took but a minute for him to find Arthur, and tell him that everything was satisfactorily arranged, and that they would leave the boat, as near as he knew, about an hour after sunset.

Half an hour later both stood on the river-bank, watching the boat that brought them off, rapidly disappearing in the gathering twilight.

"We are in for it now," said Arthur, "and if I am not wrong we will wish we were safe on board the Dragon Fly before many hours."

"We can tell more about that to-morrow," was Harry's only reply.

They now struck directly into the interior, as they wanted an abundance of time for their work.

"It will be two hours and a half before we get there," said Harry, as they walked rapidly along, "and at that time it ought to be nice and dark."

They had brought with them a wad of cotton, soaked in coal oil, and a box of matches. Each had their two navy revolvers. Their two days' rations were their only incumbrance.

They had gone, as near as they could judge, about five miles, when Arthur caught Harry's arm.

"I think somebody's following us," he whispered, softly.

"We'll soon find out," replied Harry. "When I give the word we will separate. You go to the right and I to the left, but no further away from here than is necessary for us to get well hidden. Wait till you see if anybody is coming. If we don't get together again, you have matches and coal-oil. Go ahead and make for the house and look around for me. Signal if you can without being detected. If you receive no answer from me set fire to the place and make for the Dragon Fly with all your might."

"I guess there is no need of us going out of our way," replied Arthur, looking

back. "The fellow, whoever he is, is right behind us."

It was now so dark that they ran no risk of being discovered in consequence of their uniforms, so they walked along without changing their pace till the stranger was in a few feet of them.

Both turned around. Just then a head of light was cast into their faces, completely dazzling them for a few seconds, while a voice rang out:

"Yanks! Dogon me!" and a revolver cracked and a bullet whistled past Arthur's ear.

Arthur was the first to recover himself, and he sprang toward their assailant; but the stream of light instantly disappeared as if no such thing had ever been there, and the rapid footsteps of the disturber were heard retreating.

"After him!" cried Harry, who recovered his presence of mind almost at the same time as Harry. They rushed after the retreating footsteps but had not gone far till Harry, suddenly stopping, said, "listen!"

Not a sound broke the stillness.

"It is no use to follow the scoundrel," he said. "We don't know where we are going in the dark and he can shoot us down if he catches a glimpse of us without danger to himself. We must get out of this. Come on!"

They quickly retraced their steps.

"We must go forward as fast as we can," said Arthur. "That fellow may belong to the gang and will give the alarm if he does. We must beat him there."

They started forward on a rapid dog-trot.

All was quiet since the late disturbance, and they proceeded rapidly until they reached the spot, about two miles from the house, where the party from the gunboat had stopped to consult the night before. Here Harry, who was in the lead, stopped abruptly.

"We must separate here," he said. "I will go on up to the house and set fire to it if I can. You wait here until you see the smoke or the flame; but if they don't appear inside of twenty minutes or half an hour you work you way up and see what you can do. Good-by."

In a moment Harry had disappeared in the darkness.

"I guess I may as well look around a little now that I'm left behind, and—by gracious! What's that?"

Arthur ended his soliloquy rather abruptly.

A ball of light was shining through the trees probably two hundred yards back in the direction from which they had come.

Arthur pulled out his revolver and stepped behind a tree, keeping his eyes on the light, which was rapidly approaching. Suddenly it disappeared.

"Ha!" thought Arthur to himself. "It's the very fellow that ran into us about an hour ago, and he's making for the house to tell what he's seen. We beat him by a few minutes. I must stop him by all means."

He shifted his position about ten feet, and was hardly well behind a tree again when the light shone forth not twenty feet from him, and disclosed the guerilla coming toward him on a loping trot. His course would take him close by Arthur's tree.

Our young hero had not long to wait to put his plan into execution, and just as the man came to the tree Arthur threw out his leg and the guerilla was dashed violently to the ground, and the sharp crack told that one of his pistols had been discharged by the shock.

The dark lantern flew from his hand, and after making two or three somersaults came to a stand-still some ten feet away, unharmed and still burning.

Arthur sprang upon the prostrate guerilla the instant he reached the ground, and placing the muzzle of his revolver at the other's head cried: "Not a word above your breath."

His antagonist, far from being injured by his fall, suddenly wheeled around, and in a twinkling Arthur's revolver was spinning through the air, knocked from his hand by a well-directed blow.

The guerilla now began to struggle so actively that Arthur needed all his strength and agility to retain his position on top of him.

The guerilla was tall and slim but extremely supple and powerful, and the way he thrashed about made Arthur almost despair of bringing him to terms.

He half rose to his knees, but Arthur clung to him like a burr and bore him down again, at the same time catching him by the throat.

The guerilla, realizing the danger of such a hold, made a superhuman effort, and putting up both his hands fairly wrenched the hand from his throat. By doing so, however, he released Arthur's left hand and received a stunning left-hander right from the shoulder, which laid him out, limp as a wet cloth.

Voices near by made Arthur look up, just as he was completing his conquest.

The sight appalled him.

The whole of the sparsely grown wood was alive with lanterns all moving rapidly toward him.

He sprang up to extinguish the tell-tale lantern, but before he could accor

plish it the guerilla, who was only partially stunned, raised himself on his elbow and made the woods re-echo with his vigorous yells.

Arthur gave one look for an avenue of escape and then bounded off, snatching up the lantern and shutting off the light as he went.

He had not gone one hundred feet when he saw approaching three lanterns.

Turning to the left he ran on some distance further, when on reaching the edge of a little brook he ran violently against a guerilla who had been peering into the bushes on the other side.

Arthur's forehead struck the back of the guerilla's head and both fell into the brook, the guerilla at full length and Arthur up to his knees.

He quickly waded out and glanced apprehensively around, for the ducked Confederate had given an unearthly yell, either from fright or as a warning, as he went in.

Lights were still seen here and there through the trees, though at greater distances than before, and he was in great danger of being captured if he remained longer in that locality.

However, he had completely lost his reckoning, as he had dodged and darted about in so many different directions in his flight that he could not tell one point of the compass from another. He was in great perplexity, as he did not know what to do.

Arthur was walking rapidly while thinking, and his surprise was great, on suddenly emerging from the trees, to find himself before the big, gloomy house that answered for the rendezvous of the Confederate gang.

They had chosen with rare judgment this mansion as their headquarters. A good distance from the river and well out of reach of the batteries of the vessels, in a thinly-settled country, and the forest, so thin and sparse in its entire extent, was so much more grown immediately around the house that a person passing within one hundred yards of it would not have been aware of its existence—all these conditions combined to make the place safe and secure for the purpose for which it was then used.

As Arthur stood gazing at the house his reflections were suddenly interrupted by the returning party of guerillas.

They were advancing in such a manner that made his detection sure unless he went straight forward. He quickly crossed the yard, and came close to the foundation of the house.

He learned then what he did not know before, that the first floor was raised

some eight feet above the ground, and that there was a wide stone archway leading to the basement and cellar, which was secured by two light iron doors.

Hastily stepping up to the door of the cellar he laid hold of the iron handle, and to his great joy it yielded, disclosing a gentle declivity, which he at once descended, closing the door after him. He proceeded slowly and carefully, for the place was opaquely dark. Suddenly he stopped, and his heart almost leaped into his mouth—somebody else was in the cellar.

CHAPTER V.

ARTHUR CAUGHT.

When Harry left Arthur he walked rapidly, but silently, toward the house, keeping a bright lookout for prowling guerillas.

He had proceeded but a little way when he was startled by the report of a pistol.

"That sounds as if it might come from Arthur," he thought, in alarm. "He couldn't have gotten into trouble any sooner if he had tried."

His attention was now drawn to his immediate front.

Shouts were heard, and lights came rapidly toward him, as if the inmates of the house were alarmed by the shot and were approaching to investigate.

There seemed to be about twenty lanterns, but when they came nearer he noticed that many of the men had none at all.

He made a detour to avoid running into the party, and watched them go by at a safe distance.

"I wish I knew whether Artie fired that shot," he muttered to himself, impatiently; "if he did, he didn't do it for nothing, and he knows how to take care of himself."

The last of the guerillas just here passed by, and Harry was struck with his appearance.

He was a short, stout man, with a heavy beard, the imperfect light shed by the lantern he held did not give Harry the opportunity to note its color.

This worthy was attired in a dingy and faded uniform of a captain of the Confederacy, and Harry at once put him down for Captain Henry, about whose courage and active partisanship he had heard so much.

"It would give me a promotion," he thought, "if I could take that fellow, aboard the Dragon Fly a prisoner of war."

As the Confederate captain disappeared

Harry turned his attention to the object of his expedition.

"It is just the time to do my work," he thought, "while so many of the gang are away."

He hurried forward, and arriving at the edge of the woods he stopped to reconnoiter.

The house stood silent and gloomy, while here and there a light appeared through the half-closed shutters of the first floor; the upper story was closed tight.

As Harry was about to step forward his eye alighted on two men standing before a large iron door, flanked on either side by a stone wall, slanting from the top of the foundations to the ground, the incline reaching the ground at a point about twelve feet from the foundation.

The iron door was open, and Harry, who was standing directly before it about fifty feet away, saw a lighted lantern swinging from the ceiling inside.

The men were conversing in low tones, and to Harry, who could not hear what was said, it was plain that he would have to approach the house from another quarter.

He drew back among the trees, and made a circuit of the house without finding a place to suit his purpose, and when again he came in front of the iron door the two men had disappeared.

Quickly approaching he slipped behind one of the stone flanks of the doorway, and leaning over peered into the cellar.

The light which hung from the ceiling had also disappeared, and everything appeared to be wrapped in repose.

He was deliberating on his next move when he was startled by the sound of voices behind him.

Turning hastily he saw two men just step around the corner of the house, and approach the cellar door.

Both were talking earnestly, and they seemed highly excited about something, consequently they did not see our hero step quickly over the wall and go into the cellar.

"Whew!" said Harry to himself, "it's lucky for me this cellar was here."

Taking his stand close to the iron doors he awaited developments.

The men came to the cellarway, and seemed disposed at first to go in, but changed their minds and remained outside, where the following conversation took place:

"I tell you, Pete, I don't b'lieve it, no-how."

"I do," answered Pete. "Jake ain't no liar."

"But whar's the other feller, then? Jake said they was two on 'em. He

wasn't like to tote off afore the boys went out, an' they only seed one."

"How'd you know that?" asked the other.

"'Cause Hen Bullit jes came in fer more lanterns and tole it all. He was afeard o' gettin' his head broke, as sure as my name's Jack Cobb," continued the man, "but I give him as many as he could kerry, and he went off."

"An' Hen said the young Yank walloped Jake?" asked Pete, with interest.

"Yas, an' the big dunder-head ain't done seeing stars yet."

As may be imagined, Harry listened to this conversation with the greatest interest, and it partly explained the cause of the pistol-shot, which had alarmed him earlier in the evening, but he still was in ignorance of what he wished particularly to know—whether Arthur was still at large.

The conversation without was here renewed, and Harry again bent himself to listen.

"What do you s'pose one Yank was doin' in these yere woods?" asked Pete.

"We'll find that out when we ketch him," answered Jack.

Just then a voice was heard calling: "Jack! Jack! Jack!"

"Gilbert's callin' you," observed Pete.

"I'd ha' bin thar long 'go," grumbled Jack, "if the horses hadn't a' bin out," and stepping into the cellarway he pushed the doors shut.

Harry drew a long breath as he heard their footsteps dying away, and then moving from the door he began to make his way through the interior of the cellar.

He feared to strike a match, not knowing how many guerillas might be disclosed by its light.

He knew that as long as the night lasted he might pass as one of the band, should he unexpectedly meet any of them.

"Well, I must have a little light to see what I am about, so—what's that?"

He stopped suddenly, as the cellar-doors opened, and a form appeared an instant in bold relief against the sky, and stepped inside, while the doors swung gently to again.

For a minute Harry stood spell-bound. He certainly knew that form, and was sure he had made no mistake on account of the imperfect light that came through the open doorway.

"That certainly was Arthur," he said to himself, as soon as he recovered from his surprise; "but how did he get here I would like to know?"

He deliberated a moment as to how he could satisfy himself of the truth, for not the slightest sound came from the intruder.

He started to approach the quarter where he thought Arthur stood, when his foot struck something lying loose on the floor, which made a harsh, grating noise.

He stopped in alarm, thinking of the consequences of his act if the intruder were not his friend.

He was not given time for much thought, however, for the doors opened again, and another figure entered.

He walked about a few minutes, in a manner which led Harry to think he knew the place thoroughly.

To his great chagrin Harry heard him pick up a lantern, and prepare to light it. This was sure to lead to discovery, and Harry was by no means ready for this.

So drawing his revolver he prepared to control matters, if possible.

A pale blue speck, which gradually increased to a bright flame, disclosed to Harry's eyes the guerilla kneeling before a lantern, and in the act of applying the flame to the wick.

So full of the purpose of silencing him Harry had forgotten the presence of the first comer, and revolver in hand he stood within a few feet of the last intruder.

When the latter arose to his feet he felt the cold muzzle of a revolver against his temple, and a voice said in his ear: "Silence or you die."

"That's what I say," chimed in another voice, and Arthur stepped up, brandishing a revolver, and repeated the words.

"Give me that lantern," ordered Harry, who had no time for greetings. "Unarm him, Artie."

While Harry held the lantern Arthur went quickly through the man's pockets, and brought to light a revolver and a clasp-knife.

"That replaces mine that I lost to-night," said Arthur, placing the revolver in his pocket. "Now, Harry, what do you want to do with this fellow?"

"Tie him up first," replied Harry.

While Harry kept him covered with his revolver Arthur looked around and found a strap, with which the hands and feet of the Confederate were securely tied.

"Find a place to put him," continued Harry.

Picking up his lantern Arthur held it aloft to survey the surroundings.

The room in which they were seemed to be used as a stable and harness-room. The walls were hung with saddles, bridles, whips, and sabers, while along one end of the room was a tier of stalls. A number of doors led out of the room in different directions.

Arthur proceeded to the stalls and found all empty.

"Take him back there," he said to Harry, when he returned.

With one at his head and another at his feet the guerilla was quickly placed on his back in one of the stalls.

"Now," said Harry to him, "we want our questions answered, and," flourishing his revolver in his enemy's face, "we won't hesitate to use these things, if you don't tell the truth. What's your name?"

"Jack Cobb."

"All right, Mr. Cobb; we won't do you any harm, as long as you do as we tell you. What's your business about this shanty?"

"I'm stable boss," replied Jack.

"Where's the stable?" asked Harry.

"You're in't now," answered the other.

"What did you come here for just now?" Harry went on.

"None o' yer business."

"Be careful," admonished Harry, pressing his revolver against the guerilla's head. "Answer my question."

"I come to light the lantern."

"Once more," said Harry, sternly, and the ominous click told Jack he had gone too far.

"The cap sent me here," he began, hastily, frightened at his temerity, "to find out how many saddles and bridles is here."

"What did he want to know for?" continued Harry.

"He's goin' on an' expedition," replied Jack.

"What will he do when he finds you don't come back?"

"Send somebody else to find out, I s'pose."

"Where are the horses that belong here?" asked Harry, after a moment's thought.

"Hid in the woods, 'bout half a mile away."

"What are they doing there?"

"The cap's goin' to use 'em to-night."

"How many of them are there?"

"Three."

"Good ones?"

"The best in the country. Say, Yank," Jack continued, "I 'bin answerin' your questions, now answer one of mine: What are you keepin' me down this way fer? Hey?"

"Never mind that just now. How many men are there up-stairs?"

"'Bout thirty."

"Is there any dry wood and shavings in this cellar?" demanded Harry, abruptly.

Jack seemed astonished at the question.

"What fer?" he asked, when he recovered himself.

"Never mind," replied Harry, sharply, "is there?"

"They ain't none in this room, but they is in another one over there, but I can't show it to you, 'kase you got me tied."

"Cut him loose, Artie," said Harry.

Arthur pulled the clasp-knife from his pocket, and cutting the strap from his feet assisted him to rise.

"Remember, now," said Harry, "we have our revolvers on you, and it will be sure death to you if you lead us into the hands of your friends."

Jack earnestly protested that none of the band was below the first story.

"Just remember that we have the drop on you, and you know what is best for you," was Harry's reply.

Jack now led them to the end of the stable, which was opposite the door through which they had entered. The door, like all those that connected different rooms in the cellar, was of iron grating, and secured by a spring lock.

"Reach up on the sill and git down the key," said Jack.

Arthur looked up and noticed a small projecting stone ridge, upon which he found the key.

Inserting it in the lock the latch opened, and they stepped into a long passageway.

After going some twenty feet Harry stopped abruptly, and said: "Go back and get a lantern, Artie. We can't see in this place."

Arthur quickly went back to the stable room, and was about to pick up one of the lanterns, when the outside door was kicked open and three guerillas came in.

They stopped an instant in amazement, and then, with an ejaculation of surprise, rushed upon Arthur, who stood lantern in hand, undecided how to act.

As the guerillas came upon him he dropped the lantern just as the foremost laid hold of him.

With one of his lightning blows Arthur stretched this man on the floor, while the other two came upon him at the same instant.

Another right-hander, similar to the first, dropped the second man, but the third now presented his pistol on one side, and the first, who had picked himself off the floor, presented one on the other.

With a loaded pistol looking into each eye Arthur knew that he was worsted, so he submitted without any trouble.

"Now, my young high-stepper, I reckon we got you safe now," said one, as he finished binding Arthur's hands behind his back.

"Come along, now," said one. "I'm mighty sure the cap'n 'd like to see you,"

and Arthur was hurried out into the open air again.

They took him around the house and walked directly toward a flight of broad stone steps which seemed to Arthur to lead into the front hall.

His conjecture proved true, for his captors went quickly up the steps and kicked open the magnificent oak doors and entered a wide hall.

"These fellows have driven a Unionist family from their house and taken possession of it," was Arthur's first thought after entering, but his attention was quickly drawn to his own more pressing affairs.

CHAPTER VI.

BEFORE THE GUERRILLA CAPTAIN.

His captors led him down the hall directly to the door that opened at the other end.

Throwing open this door they stepped into a room that was nearly full of men—those who had not long since returned from their unsuccessful search for Arthur.

The entrance of the two guerillas and their captive created the greatest sensation. They crowded around asking and shouting questions, with exclamations indicative of the greatest astonishment.

"Whar'd you ketch 'im?"

"Who ketched the Yank."

These questions were propounded by nearly everybody in the room, making the babel of voices almost deafening.

This lasted only a moment when a hoarse voice was heard shouting:

"What's all this row about? Less noise!"

A score of voices replied:

"The Yank's ketched, cap'n."

The mob fell apart to allow the captors to bring the prisoner to their chief.

Making their way through the crowd with Arthur still between them, they presently stood before a short, heavily-built man, with a bushy black beard.

He bent a sharp glance on Arthur and demanded his captors to make their report.

"We found this Yank in the stable, cap'n," began one.

The captain started.

"Where?" he demanded.

"In the stable," repeated he who had spoken. "An' here's Pete Bink an' Tom Burk as was with me w'en I found him."

"Go on," said the captain.

"He was standin' in the middle o' the floor w'en we went in an' we jus' lit on him an' brought him up here. That's all I know about it," concluded the spokesman.

"What's the matter with your forehead?" asked the captain. "Did you run against the wall?"

The guerilla looked slowly around the circle of interested listeners and then at Arthur, before replying.

"The Yank gimme a knock," he said, doggedly.

Serious as his position was, Arthur could not refrain from joining in the laugh at his captor's expense.

"Oh, it ain't me alone," said the guerilla, nettled at the mirth of his friends. "Look at Pete Bink."

The gaze of the gang was instantly directed toward Pete, whose one eye was almost closed by the blow Arthur had given him in the scuffle in the stable.

Pete was made the butt of innumerable jests on account of the black appearance of his eye.

"Did yer rub charcoal in yer eye, Pete?" asked one.

"No, he run agin the cellar wall," said another.

They kept on in this way till the chief suddenly ordered silence.

Turning to Arthur, who had been standing perfectly quiet all the while, he said:

"Young man, how did you come to be in our cellar?"

"I walked in the door," replied Arthur.

"Why did you go in?" asked the guerilla chief.

"Because I wanted to escape your band," replied Arthur.

"Were you the Yankee soldier or scout or spy what raised an alarm in the woods near here a short time ago?"

"I guess I'm the one you mean, though I'm no spy."

"Ah!" said the captain. "What were you doing about here, then?"

"I wasn't doing anything. I was walking along peacefully when one of—I suppose—your men came along and—"

Arthur was going to say "molested me," when he remembered it was he that stopped the guerilla and not the guerilla who had stopped him.

The guerilla chief finished the sentence for him.

"Yes," he said, "you were walking along peacefully until he came along. Then you saw fit to try and knock his brains out. What was your business in this place?"

"I have business in this place or rather in this neighborhood," replied Arthur, "but I refuse to divulge the nature of it."

"In that case I must consider you as a Union spy and act accordingly," and raising his voice the captain called two men

"Take the prisoner up-stairs and see that he is placed in a secure apartment."

"This is getting rather unpleasant," thought Arthur, as he was taken from the room. "One good thing is," he continued to himself, "that Harry is still loose and has that guerilla to guide him around so he may get up-stairs and get me loose, too. I hope he won't set the house on fire with me in it, tied."

They went into the wide hall, and ascending the broad stair-case went into a room on the second floor.

By the light of a lantern which one of the guerillas carried, Arthur noticed that he was in a very large room totally devoid of furniture. At the high windows hung torn and tattered lace curtains which looked as if their appearance was due more to hard usage than to age. It was altogether a gloomy-looking room and the guerillas seemed to be anxious to get through their work quickly.

One of them ordered Arthur to lie down, and taking a rope from his pocket tied it securely round his ankles, and picking up the lantern they left the room, locking the door after them.

Arthur tossed about on the hard floor for some time after they left, and finally, fatigued with the long walk from the river and by the exciting scenes through which he had passed, he dropped into an uneasy slumber.

CHAPTER VII.

ALMOST TRAPPED.

When Harry sent Arthur for a lantern while he waited in the passage-way, he thought his work nearly accomplished. He had figured out a plan which in substance was this: He would immediately set fire to the house by starting the shavings in the room of which Jack, the guerilla teamster, had spoken; then compelling him to show them the way, they would go and seize Captain Henry's horses, all of which he calculated they could do by the time the fire had alarmed the inmates of the house.

When once they were seated on the captain's horses he was sure, from Jack's description of them, that he need be afraid of no pursuit.

All this passed rapidly through his mind as Arthur left him to procure a lantern, and when he heard the voices and the scuffle he knew that Arthur had been discovered.

His own revolver kept Jack in subjection, but he waited apprehensively to see if Arthur's captors made any investigation of the cellar, but he was so close he heard them declare their intention of

taking their captive before their superior at once.

Their footsteps dying away almost immediately assured him that nothing was to be feared from that source.

"I must have a lantern," he said to himself, "or I can't get along."

Catching Jack by the arm he hurried him back to the stable.

"I want a lantern; not the one on the floor, but another one," he said. "Quickly, where can I get it?"

"They ain't none here," replied Jack. "They was all took to hunt in the woods fer yer brother."

"I have to take this one, then," said Harry.

He was about to pick up the one on the floor, when he saw to his delight the dark lantern that Arthur had brought.

"Lead the way," he said, hastily picking it up, "and be quick about it."

They started out into the passage-way again, and in a few moments were standing before the door that they had started to come to before.

Above the edge was the key, and opening the door Harry stepped back, making Jack enter first.

Harry locked the door after him and was startled almost immediately by hearing the shuffling of feet and voices on the floor above.

He instantly stepped up to Jack, and putting his revolver against his temple, said: "I told you I would shoot you down and I meant it—if you lead me into trouble."

This room was below the room in which the guerillas were congregated when Arthur was brought in a prisoner, and Harry upon elevating his lantern noticed a trap-door in the floor above, against which was placed a ladder.

"Them fellers don't never come down here," said Jack, sullenly. "An' you wanted me to show you the shavin's."

In one corner was a huge pile of wood and small shavings, though they looked as if they had not been disturbed in years.

"How do those shavings happen to be here?" asked Harry.

"Don't know," answered the guerilla. "They bin here as long as I have."

This was rather indefinite, seeing Harry knew as little about the shavings as about Jack, but he was not interested in them except inasmuch as they answered his purpose.

He busied himself with pulling together a large pile of them. When this was done he stepped back and surveyed them approvingly.

Then he quickly placed the small wood on top of it, after which he carefully laid

on a number of large boards. This raised the pile to the height of about six feet, or about two feet less than that of the ceiling.

When this was finished he pulled from his pocket his wad of cotton and bottle of coal-oil, and pouring the whole on the cotton he placed it in the midst of the shavings at the bottom of the pile.

"There," he said to himself, "that ought to do the business."

Jack had watched the whole proceeding in unspeakable surprise.

"What in tarnation are you goin' to do?" he demanded again and again.

Harry, who had not seen fit to make him any reply, now turned to and asked: "Where did that three hundred men come from that were here last night?"

"The cap'n gathered 'em in the kentry," replied the guerilla.

"Is there any other place where they gather?" continued Harry.

"Not as I knows on."

Whether this was the truth Harry could not be certain, as he had no means of ascertaining whether his captive was deceiving him or not.

The guerilla seemed to accept his situation gracefully, and his ready answers gave him no time for prevarication, unless he was very expert in that accomplishment.

"Now, I tell you what I want you to do," said Harry, abruptly changing the subject. "I want you to take me up stairs, and help me to liberate that young fellow that came here with me. Will you do it?"

"I can't," replied Jack, evasively.

"Well, there is a private stair-way in the house that leads all the way to the garret, isn't there?"

"It's no private stair-way, but there is one," answered the guerilla.

"Well, take me to it, right away."

They went out of the room, locking the door after them.

They had not gone but a few feet when a light suddenly appeared at the other end of the passage-way.

One of the guerillas was approaching with a lantern in his hand.

Harry and his captive were just at a door when the light first appeared, and he instantly shut off his lantern, warning Jack at the same time to keep silence.

Hastily reaching up above the door he seized the key, and unlocking the door pushed Jack in, while he himself followed.

Just as the door closed the guerilla in the passage called out:

"Jack! Jack! where ar you? You lazy lubber. I sent for you half an hour ago."

But Jack was silent, Harry's ready revolver being again called into play, while he looked around for some place of concealment.

The doors of the cellar, as has before been noted, being grated, the guerilla had only to raise his lantern and hold it against the bars to get a complete view of the room, except the small space along the front wall on each side of the door.

"Who is that out there?" asked Harry, in a whisper.

"It's Gilbert, I guess," replied Jack.

"Who's he?" asked Harry again.

"He's the captain's lieutenant," answered Jack.

"Will he look in the rooms as he goes along?"

"I guess so," was the cheering response.

"Well, we must get close to the wall, and keep out of his sight, if we can," and they shifted their positions accordingly.

Gilbert, however, did not search much for his missing man, but passed by, repeating his call every minute or so, and muttering to himself in a manner that boded ill for Jack.

In the course of about five minutes he returned still more enraged at the fruitlessness of his search.

"I'll put the scoundrel on bread and water a week for this, an' I'll find him to-night if he's in this building if I have to send every man that's up-stairs down here," he growled, as he repassed the room in which the two were concealed.

As his footsteps died away Harry demanded:

"How will he get up-stairs? the way we go up?"

"Yes; unless he goes out the back way and up," answered Jack; "but that ain't likely."

"Well, we must follow him right away in case he sends somebody down here to hunt you up. Come on."

They were once more in the passage-way walking rapidly.

"We turn off here," said Jack, abruptly, stopping where another passage intersected the one in which they were.

"This leads to the stairs, does it?" asked Harry.

"Yes," answered the other, and they proceeded down the new passage-way.

They had not gone far when they were again startled by footsteps behind them.

Just as they turned another guerilla came into view in the passage they had just left.

He stopped short on seeing our hero and his captive, and after giving one stare he fled from the spot as if pursued by demons, while the bullet sent after him by Harry whistled harmlessly past his head.

"Hurry up, now," said Harry, sharply, to the guerilla hostler. "That fellow will make mischief enough for me."

Indeed, the other guerilla was doing his best to raise the occupants of the mansion. He kept up a continuous yelling and pounding which, added to the noise of Harry's shot, made racket enough to be heard far and wide.

Meanwhile Harry had pushed Jack along at a rapid rate, and after changing their course once more they finally reached a small door of iron built into the wall.

"Where's the key? Quick!" demanded Harry, impatiently, looking back every moment to see if their pursuers had yet come in sight.

"Don't need no key," answered Jack, who now began to show obvious signs of unwillingness to act as guide any longer.

"How do you get through, then?" demanded Harry, finally. "Remember, I stand no fooling," and the revolver was again raised.

"They is a spring in the upper corner. Put yer finger on't and the door will slide," replied Jack, once more subdued.

Harry held up his lantern but saw nothing that looked like a spring, and he suspected the guerilla was deceiving him; nevertheless he pressed on the corner and the door slid back.

Motioning Jack through he looked down the passage again; it was still empty, but the shouts and footsteps told that a party of the rebels was not far distant and approaching rapidly.

"How far does this door slint?" asked Harry, observing that it remained open after he went through.

"Give it a push an' it'll slide shut agin," replied Jack, starting up the narrow stair-way.

After proceeding till he reached about the level of the first floor, Harry asked:

"Where does this lead to?"

"Clear up to the garret."

"Are there no doors leading from it on each floor?"

"No."

"Why is that?" asked Harry, surprised.

"Don't know," was Jack's reply.

He seemed to know but little of the whys and wherefores of the house, if he told the truth, and what he didn't know he seemed content to remain in ignorance of.

"Well, we'll stop here a few minutes anyway, till those fellows have time to get into the cellar."

Jack stopped, and as he did so marvelled at how completely he was in the Yankee's power. It is true his hands were bound, but then he had always be

lieved like the larger part of the rebels that one of their soldiers was a match for at least two Union soldiers, and he awakened, as did many others, to the error of their idea before they fought many months of the war.

"Where do you confine your prisoners in this house?" asked Harry, suddenly breaking in upon his reverie.

"Never had any afore."

"Where do you suppose Arthur is?" asked Harry, impatiently.

"Maybe in the cellar or on the first floor or on the second," replied Jack.

Harry, in disgust, ordered him to proceed up stairs, thinking he could use his time more profitably otherwise than in questioning the perverse guerilla.

The stair-way seemed very long, and it seemed to Harry that they must have come very much higher than the house could possibly be.

At last they stepped under a trap-door, which upon opening, Harry was surprised to find himself looking out upon the flat roof of the house. He turned fiercely to the guerilla and demanded why he had brought him here.

"Wait a minit," replied Jack, coolly, and stepping out upon the roof he directed his steps to one side a short distance.

"Here," he said to Harry, who followed closely, "is the trap that lets down into the garret."

"Is it safe to go down there?" asked Harry.

"They ain't anybody there, if that's what you mean."

"Go ahead, then," commanded Harry.

The guerilla stepped carefully upon the ladder which served the trap as steps, and with Harry following closely, they descended into a large garret unpartitioned and unfinished. Jack, without stopping, led the way to the other end, and lifting another trap-door with his feet disclosed another small stair-way.

"That leads to a little room on the second floor," he explained, "an' that opens to the hall."

"All right," said Harry. "Go ahead."

Jack started down the stairs, and when they reached the little room they heard the noise of the search which was being vigorously prosecuted.

Harry went to the door that led to the hall and opening it a crack peered out, and then turning around quickly motioned Jack to his side. "Who's that?" he whispered.

Jack peered through the crack and drew back nodding his head expressively. "That's cap," he said.

It was the same short, thick-set, heavily-bearded man that Harry had seen a

couple of hours before in the woods, and he was walking rapidly down the hall.

At length, reaching a door he unlocked it and stepped inside.

"Come on," said Harry, and they hurried after him.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FIRE STARTED.

It seemed to Arthur that he had scarcely fallen asleep when a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder and a voice said in his ear:

"So ho! my young bird, it's not you, then, that's making this disturbance?"

The captain had just betaken himself to his rest when the uproar was raised in the cellar, and the first thing he thought of was his prisoner—hence his visit to Arthur.

Arthur with difficulty collected his scattered senses. He did not know where he was at first, and just as his whereabouts and the condition of things began to dawn on him the captain of the guerilla band spoke again.

"What has become of your partner?" he asked. "There were two of you roaming around this evening, but I neglected to seize the other lad when I did you."

As the captain was speaking the door, opened softly and two figures stole silently in.

Arthur, who was lying face to the door, saw the whole proceeding, while the guerilla chief, who was facing Arthur, remained in ignorance of it.

"I guess you would have seized him if you could when your men captured me," replied Arthur, bluntly, not knowing just what to say to hold the captain's attention.

"Still," said the captain, "you haven't told me where the other spy is."

"Here he is!" exclaimed another voice.

The captain sprang up, only to find himself confronted by the navy revolver that had quelled his underling so effectually and so often during the past two hours.

"Walk into that corner and don't say a word," commanded Harry, and stooping down he cut Arthur's bonds, at the same time keeping an eye on his two captives.

"We must tie the captain up, Artie," he said. "Get something quick. It's getting too warm around here for us."

Arthur cast his eyes about the room, and then stepped up to the window and tore down the curtains.

"They'll hold him, I guess," he muttered, "and it's the only thing there is."

In the course of a few seconds the

tain was in the same plight in which he had found Arthur only a few moments before.

When Harry said it was getting too warm for them, he felt that he had been too long coming to that conclusion. He might well think that, after creating such a disturbance among the guerillas, and keeping out of their power so long, they would take particular precautions to prevent him and Arthur from escaping finally.

That they could easily do this he did not doubt, and if fortune came not to his aid very soon the future looked gloomy enough.

Still the guerillas, thus far, had not shown any remarkable sagacity, and taking their stupidity for granted he hoped to outwit them by their own actions, rather than by any brilliant move on his own part.

One cause of his perplexity was Jack, the hostler—he did not know what disposition to make of him.

He feared to take him along on the move that he was about to make, and he hesitated about leaving him with the guerilla chief.

While his brows were knit over these matters the sounds of the search were gradually coming nearer, as if a party of the guerillas were about to begin on the first floor.

Realizing that whatever was to be done must be done quickly, Harry said:

"Where can we put this fellow, Artie?" nodding toward Jack. "We want to get him out of the way."

"We might tie his feet and put him into the next room," suggested Arthur. "There's a door. See where it leads too."

Harry opened the door indicated, and by the aid of the lantern discovered another room, somewhat smaller than the one in which they were. He was about to close the door when he noticed a small door in the wall on the opposite side, about four feet high by one broad.

"What is that little door used for?" he demanded of the prisoners.

Jack Cobb looked at his chief, expecting him to reply, but the captain remained silent.

"Speak out!" exclaimed Harry, impatiently, drawing his revolver, but for once in the evening he had mistaken his man.

The guerilla chieftain was a brave man, and he looked into the muzzle of the revolver without flinching, at the same time saying calmly:

"If you think you are more likely to get information from me by shooting me, I am welcome to make the attempt."

Harry looked at him a moment in as-

tonishment, and then without a word turned to the other guerilla, and repeated his question.

"Jack," interrupted the guerilla chief, "if you reply to that question remember that you have an account with me to settle, and a severe one, too."

But Jack had already caught the captain's spirit, and had refused to make reply.

Harry put his revolver back in his pocket, turning as he did so to the guerilla chief.

"You are right," he said. "I could gain nothing by taking the lives of either of you," and going directly to the little door with a lantern and opening it, he disappeared beyond it.

Arthur, who had said nothing during the whole proceedings, waited apprehensively for the result of Harry's trip.

Presently Harry came back, and catching the guerilla hostler by the shoulders motioned Arthur to seize his feet, which had been bound together.

"Now," said Harry, when they had deposited their burden in the next room, "we'll leave."

"Where to now?" questioned Arthur.

"Come on, I'll show you," answered Harry, once more stepping out into the hall.

Leading the way to the small room in which were the stairs leading to the garret, he was about to ascend, when a series of unearthly yells and shouts burst upon his ears.

Our two friends looked at each other in dismay.

Both realized that they had made a serious mistake in neglecting to gag their two prisoners.

Before their shouts could be suppressed the alarm would be all through the house.

"Be quick," cried Harry, springing up the stairs; "we haven't a moment to lose."

"Bolt that door behind you," he cried, on reaching the head of the stairs.

"Now, notice where you are going," he continued, when Arthur joined him.

"Follow me, and lock every door that has a fastening."

With the aid of their lantern they soon found the ladder leading up to the roof.

When they pushed off the trap door Arthur whispered to Harry, who carried the lantern: "Shut off the light; there may be some of the rascals out in the yard."

When they reached the door that led to the cellar they listened a moment, but if there was any persons coming they could neither see nor hear them.

Unluckily for them there was no bolt

on the inside of this door, and all they could do, as they went through, was to pull it tight shut.

They proceeded as quickly and as silently as possible down the narrow stairway, and as they neared the bottom the shouts and noises had nearly all died away.

"This must lead to the center of the earth," said Arthur, in surprise. "How did you happen to find this out Harry?"

"Oh, I've been around the whole place while you've been running afoul of every guerilla that has come within a mile of you."

"I did run most terribly foul of one of the rascals. Just look at my forehead," replied Arthur, chuckling.

"What did that?" asked Harry, noticing a large red spot much swelled.

"I ran into a fellow out in the woods, and struck him on the back of the head with my forehead, and knocked him into a little brook head first. Just look at my feet how wet they are. I went in, too," and Arthur surveyed his feet ruefully.

"Well, we must be moving, or you will be worse off than that by a good bit," said Harry, hastening on.

In a few moments more they reached the bottom of the stair-way.

Listening a moment Harry opened the door cautiously and peered out. The passage was in darkness, and not a sound greeted their ears except from above.

Stepping out they moved quickly down the passage, intent on reaching the room where the pile of shavings had been heaped.

Turning off at the first intersection of passages Harry stopped a moment to think.

"I guess this is the right way," he muttered, stepping forward again. In a few seconds they reached the main passage, and there Harry recovered his reckoning. A few steps brought them to the door of the room for which they were making, and on noticing it Harry stopped short.

It was not as he left it—locked, but wide open.

The guerillas had evidently been in it, as in every other room in the cellar, searching for him.

He wondered what they thought of the pile of combustible material, and whether they suspected its purpose.

After making sure that nobody was there he stepped in.

"Humph!" he said to Arthur, as the condition of the room fell upon his eyes. "They must have thought we were hiding under that pile."

Something, indeed, they must have thought, for the pile was there no longer, and what went to constitute it was scattered over every inch of the floor.

Boards, shavings, and small wood were lying about in the most promiscuous fashion, and the odor of the coal-oil that Harry had used pervaded the room.

The two set to work with all haste to set the pile up again. The cotton wad saturated with oil was found in a corner, and as many of the soaked shavings as could be gathered were placed upon it.

In the course of a quarter of an hour the heap touched the sleepers in the floor above.

"We'll get her started, anyway," muttered Harry, as he knelt down and struck a match.

Holding it a moment until it blazed up brightly, he applied it to the cotton wad, then to several other points.

In a minute the whole pile was in a blaze, and the smoke rolling out compelled them to vacate the room as quickly as they could.

Upon reaching the passage-way they looked back to see how the fire was progressing. Through the smoke they could see the flames licking the ceiling, which was already much blackened.

"Come on," said Harry, moving off. "The quicker we get away from here the better it will be for us."

They started in the direction of the stable, but hearing voices there they paused.

"Wait a second," whispered Arthur, "and I'll take a peep and see who's there."

Stepping softly forward he stood a moment before the door which led into the stable.

"Well?" said Harry, when he returned.

"Eight of them there," was the reply.

Turning about they started back toward the fire again. When they passed the door they could see that the fire had caught the floor above and was spreading rapidly.

"Let's turn off here," suggested Arthur, pointing to a passage that they had not yet had occasion to use.

Just then they were startled by shouts of "fire! fire!"

"Hurry up!" both exclaimed, darting down the passage.

The cry of fire was taken up and echoed and re-echoed through the whole house.

CHAPTER IX.

PURSUIT.

When the guerilla chief was taken and bound so cleverly by Harry, he knew that he would not remain long a captive, as somebody was sure to come to the room to look after the captive they had placed there only a short time before.

The captain was therefore surprised that no move was made to gag either himself or his hostler, and accordingly congratulated himself that the tables would be once more turned, and this time in his favor.

He had no sooner satisfied himself that the Yankees were out of sight, than he and Jack Cobb set the house in alarm by shouting at the top of their voices. Their situation, however, prevented their being heard for some minutes, thus giving our heroes a valuable start.

Though Cobb had been placed in the next room, it was more for the purpose of preventing him assisting the captain to release himself, than to put him out of reach of his chief's voice; consequently the following dialogue took place, without material inconvenience to either of them:

"How did you happen to fall in with those two Yanks?" was the captain's first question.

"They dropped on me when I went to the cellar to see 'bout them saddles an' bridles," answered Jack.

"Hum!" growled the captain. "It's funny you should let two spring chickens like those fellows take you in."

"I couldn't do nothin' w'en each stuck a revolver 'most down my throat," replied Jack, sullenly, thinking at the time that his chief had not done any better, when he was captured a few minutes before.

"Weren't you there when Pete Bink and the other two caught the big Yank? Why didn't they get the other one?"

"Cause they didn't see him."

"Where was he?"

"In the main cellar, and the other was in the stable."

"How did they happen to be separated?"

"The big feller went back for a lantern, and that's how he fell in with Pete's crowd."

"And left his mark on them, too," added the captain to himself; then raising his voice he asked: "What did the Yanks want in the cellar?"

"One o' them axed me if they was any shavin's an' wood in the cellar, and told me to take him around," answered Jack.

The captain started.

"That's a very suspicious circumstance," he muttered; then louder, "tell me all that happened until you reached this room."

Cobb thereupon rehearsed the various maneuvers above and below, and was just finishing when hurrying footsteps in the hall announced that their shouts had been heard and assistance had arrived.

The half-dozen guerillas who opened the door stood speechless with surprise at the sight of their bold chief lying bound in the heart of his own stronghold, which hitherto no enemy had approached nearer to than five miles.

"Well, men," growled the captain, not relishing much the thought of the spectacle he presented, "don't stand staring there like a lot of fools, but get me loose."

With a chorus of ejaculations and imprecations against those who had the audacity to reduce their chief to such a plight, the guerillas crowded into the room, and quickly releasing Captain Henry, demanded who had bestowed the indignity upon him.

The captain pointed expressively to the spot where Arthur lay, at the same time saying:

"Where's our prisoner?"

Some were starting out to renew the search, when the chief ordered them to await his commands.

"Go into the next room and bring Cobb here, before anything else is done."

Two of the group about the captain instantly went to the next room, and in a moment reappeared with Jack Cobb.

"Is there anybody still looking for the Yanks?" demanded the captain.

A number of the guerillas answered in the affirmative.

"Whereabouts?" asked the captain.

"Some in the cellar an' some on the first floor, an' we come up-stairs to see what the hollerin' was fer," was the answer.

"Go down to the cellar," said the captain to the speaker, "and tell those who are there to guard all ways leading out, and to shoot the first person that goes out, no matter who he is."

Then turning to another he said:

"Gilbert, how many have we here to-night?"

"About thirty," answered that worthy.

"Take four other men and surround the house to catch the blue-jackets in case they get out. We must have them at any cost."

Others were given orders to search the first and second floors, while the captain purposed, with Cobb's assistance, to take upon himself a special search.

When all had taken their departure save Cobb, the chief went up to him and said:

"You were in that room. Are you sure the blue-jackets didn't go down there?" indicating the small door, two by four feet, the purpose of which, it will be remembered, Captain Henry declined to acquaint Harry.

"No; he came up an' took me in the

next room, an' then they both went out into the hall," answered Cobb, positively.

The room of which the captain spoke was a small room, about eight feet square and seven feet from floor to ceiling. It was placed, by some strange whim, between the first and second floors, under the stair-well, so that its existence would never be known, except for the small door, before spoken of, in the room behind that in which Arthur had been confined.

What the original intention of placing the room there was, not even the guerillas knew, and they set it down to the eccentricity of the builder. When one thinks of the extensive cellar and devious maze of passage-ways and the secret stairs it is not surprising that they should come to such a conclusion.

The captain of the guerilla band, for reasons best known to himself, had kept the existence of this apartment a profound secret to his men until a short time previous, when one of them discovered it during the captain's absence.

In consequence of its discovery, Captain Henry issued orders that no one but himself and his lieutenant, Gilbert, should under any circumstances enter the room. The reason for this was that the place was a store-house for what ammunition the band used and what they captured from United States supply wagons, and for any other articles the captain deemed it expedient to keep out of the hands of his men.

The captain mused a moment when Cobb told him that our heroes had not gone to the magazine-room, as it was called, and motioning Jack to follow he stepped out into the hall.

They first went to a number of places that the captain considered of sufficient security to attract the attention of Harry and Arthur, Cobb meanwhile adding some incidents that he had left untold, when the guerillas crowded into the room to effect their release.

By this time the captain had reached the little room that led to the garret and thence to the roof, when he recollected that he was unarmed.

He turned around and said: "Jack, go and get me a couple of pistols and get a musket for yourself. Hurry up."

Jack stepped out of the room and in the course of a few minutes returned with the required articles.

"Now," said the captain, "you go ahead and show me just where they have been, so that I can tell what they have not found out."

The stair door through which they passed had been wrenched off its hinges by the party already sent to the garret,

and the captain paused as he noted it; but just as he was about to make an inquiry a wild shout from below fell upon his ear.

"Fire! fire!" was the cry. "Fire! fire! The house's on fire! Hi! hi!"

CHAPTER X.

AN EXPLOSION.

When Harry and Arthur heard the alarm of fire started and taken up throughout the whole house, they knew that matters with them were fast approaching a crisis. They might escape in the confusion resulting from the fire, but if not, it was hard to tell what the guerillas, already so furious, would do to them.

As matters stood then there was, though the boys didn't know it, four different parties searching for them, one on each floor and one outside. The fire-alarm, so unexpected, might reduce this force for the purpose of suppressing the fire, but even if such was the case their prospects of escape were not very bright.

Harry, however, congratulated himself that the work which he had come on the expedition to perform was done, and so he could look to the future with a lighter heart than if the whole matter had resulted in failure.

Another cause for congratulation was that both of them were still at large, and he was confident if they could only remain so till the vigor of the search had passed by, they would then have an excellent chance to make their way to the river.

It was part of Harry's plan in the first place to fire the house and get out of it before the alarm was raised, but it has been seen that from the first there was a series of interruptions and obstacles to the carrying out of this plan, which might never have been surmounted had it not been for Arthur's capture.

They were now trying to find their way out of the cellar. Harry was not familiar enough with it to accomplish this.

They had just entered a passage-way hitherto unnoticed when the alarm of fire reached them, and stopping, they listened a few seconds to the hub-bub that instantly arose.

They then proceeded to examine each room as they went, by holding their lantern above them and peering between the bars of the door.

There was nothing encouraging to be found, for nothing greeted them but bare stone walls.

"Let's go to the end of this passage

before we look at anything else," said Arthur impatiently.

"All right," replied Harry, handing him the lantern. "Go ahead; I'll stay here and watch."

Arthur took the lantern and started down the passage at a rapid walk. He noticed that the doors got wider apart as he went along, and near the end of the passage there was a space of nearly twenty feet between them. He was surprised also to find the passage turn abruptly just as he thought he had reached the end.

Before turning the corner he closed the lantern and listened intently. Hearing nothing he advanced cautiously in the darkness, feeling his way along the wall with his hand.

After moving along about ten feet in this way he brought up suddenly, and feeling about concluded he had reached the end.

A ray of light from the lantern showed him he was not wrong.

Turning on the full light again he closely examined the wall, which seemed to be a bit of solid masonry thrown across the passage.

Arthur's sharp eyes detected an almost imperceptible crack running from the top to a point about a foot from the bottom of the wall.

"That must mean something," he muttered, and stepping up closer he went over the whole surface again.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, as he discovered two horizontal cracks meeting and running at right angles from the first.

"Another secret door, as sure as I live," he said to himself. "I wonder where it leads to?"

Picking up the lantern he left the place to call Harry, and going hastily back he held it up to attract his attention, but not seeing him Arthur went further, at the same time saying to himself: "I thought the place I left him was nearer."

He walked almost to the end of the passage, greatly surprised and alarmed to find no trace of Harry.

He was about to go further when the sound of a number of feet approaching compelled him to beat a hasty retreat in the darkness.

Upon reaching the private door he stopped to think what could have caused Harry to disappear so completely and in so little time.

He surely would not have given up to the guerillas," thought Arthur, "without a struggle and I should have heard that. We have the confoundedest luck," he growled to himself, his wrath beginning to rise at their successive failures to keep together. "How am I going to

help him or he help me when neither knows where the other is? Just as a place to get out is found——"

Arthur stopped; he was not sure that this was a place to get out, and without more grumbling he set to work to find out.

He went carefully over the whole wall again, but he was rewarded by finding nothing more. Then he searched for a spring in the door and on both sides, but in this also he failed.

He stepped back and again looked over the whole surface, and not finding anything said to himself:

"I'll have to try it this way, I guess."

Putting both hands close to the edge, opposite the one that held the hinges, if there were such things in its make-up, he gave a gentle push, but the door did not budge.

Repeating the action with more strength, he saw with delight that it moved inward about half an inch, but as soon as he withdrew the pressure it resumed its first position.

"Ha! Spring hinges," he said to himself, applying himself to it again.

It was only by the exercise of all his strength that he was able to open it enough to see beyond, but he was gratified beyond expression to see that it was all that was between him and the yard.

"I don't know that I can do better than to get out of this, so if Harry is captured I can do something for him, maybe."

So saying Arthur drew back, and picking up the lantern prepared to leave the cellar.

When he pushed open the stone door again it worked much easier.

"Those hinges must be awful rusty," he commented, as he forced himself through.

Noticing the coast was clear he stepped entirely out into the yard, still bearing the faithful lantern.

He turned around to look for the door, but it had swung back, and all trace of it was lost in the rough stone foundation.

Just then a thought came to him that almost took his breath away.

"Suppose the fire had been put out."

It was still dark and he saw no trace or sign of anything like fire.

He stole away, making for the border of trees, resolved to hide himself there and await developments.

About twenty feet to the one side of him was the large cellar door by which he had entered. Upon the top of one of the side walls stood a man looking in at the window placed above the cellar-way.

He was so interested in what he saw within that he did not see Arthur step

quickly across the yard and into the bushes.

This move was not made a moment too soon, for he had scarcely entered the woods when a bright light shot up from the top of the house, illuminating the surroundings with a lurid glare.

The fire had burst through the roof, and the guerillas were about abandoning their efforts to extinguish it.

In a few moments they began to pour out of the house at all points, and Arthur was compelled to exchange his position for one deeper in the woods.

The guerillas were almost exhausted by their fierce battle with the flames, and most of them lay down on blankets in the yard to catch a little sleep before the dawn of day, which was fast drawing near.

A half-dozen others took lanterns and began to search the woods, as if looking for something, but just as they reached the bushes the captain and two others burst from the burning building, and running toward the recumbent group shouted something in a loud voice.

Immediately all started up, and with exclamations of surprise and fear started for the woods at the top of their speed.

Before Arthur had to think what could be the cause of their terror, a terrific concussion shook the ground under his feet, and stone and burning wood were thrown high in the air, and one of the walls of the doomed house fell inward with a loud crash, sending forth a golden cloud of sparks.

The explosion seemed to end the fury of the flames, and by daylight nothing but a smoking heap of ruins was left of the once noble stone mansion.

CHAPTER XI.

IN A REBEL PRISON.

We left Harry alone in the passage-way looking after Arthur's retreating figure, and wondering if they would be able to circumvent the guerillas in the end.

He thrust his hands deep into his pockets and leaned against the wall, thinking of all they had passed through that night, when he was startled to see the light of Arthur's lantern disappear.

"I wonder if he hears any of the rebels," he said to himself, anxiously, straining his ears to catch the slightest sound.

He waited a few minutes, and was about to steal after Arthur when he heard voices in the opposite direction.

Hastily deciding upon his course he went to the nearest door, and getting the key from the sill above it, unlocked it and went in.

He remembered as he endeavored to find some place of concealment that when looking into this room a few minutes before he had seen a door of wood on the opposite side.

He at once decided to get beyond it, but on pushing it open it gave a creak that frightened him so much that he shut it with a bang that attracted the attention of the guerillas in the passage.

Looking through the key-hole he saw two of them stop at the door which led into the passage and survey carefully the interior of the room, but as he had locked that door and the one he last opened, he did not much fear them, unless they used force to get in.

What was his surprise then to see one of the men pull a key from his pocket and open the outer door, saying at the same time: "That must be the one we heard," pointing to the door behind which Harry stood.

When he heard this Harry felt that his freedom was about to end: Nevertheless he quickly inserted the key in the lock to prevent the guerilla using his, if he had one; then drawing a match along the wall he saw by its light another door, through which he passed just as he heard the rebel endeavoring to get his key in the other lock.

Having by this method got the start of his pursuers he passed through several other rooms, and going so far from where he left Arthur that he could not have returned if he would.

The fire now made an unexpected barrier to his progress. The room he had last entered was next to one in which he could hear the roaring and crackling of the burning timbers, and all around echoed the shouts of the guerillas, who were making strenuous efforts to subdue it.

It was so hot in the room that he found he would have to get out of it at any cost.

There were only two doors in it—the one by which he had entered and another on the opposite side.

Fearful of running into the two guerillas from whom he had just escaped, he chose the latter, and unlocking it he peered cautiously out.

Only about twenty paces away the flames were roaring fiercely, and licking up the huge dry timbers with great rapidity.

He was about to draw back and seek an escape by the other door, when his arm was roughly seized and two loaded revolvers were thrust into his face, while a voice hissed in his ear:

"I've got you this time for good."

When Harry recovered himself he found that he was in the possession of Captain Henry and his hostler, both of whom he

had left bound up-stairs not more than half an hour before.

He was ordered savagely to go down the passage-way as quick as he could move, and as he heard the guerilla chief mutter something about "Yankee fools that would stand around a burning powder-magazine till they were blown up," he remembered for the first time since he went into the little secret room up-stairs what he had seen there.

He judged from Henry's remark and from his haste to leave the locality that the fire was perilously near the powder-room, and not wishing, any more than the captain, to be blown up, he increased his pace accordingly.

"Hurry up, cap'n," said Jack Cobb, whose face was white with fear. "We'll be dead men if we ain't outen this in no time."

They were already running down the passage-way at the top of their speed, and Harry, who was much lighter of foot than either of them, was forging ahead when the captain ordered him to regulate his pace in accordance with theirs.

They passed through the stable without stopping, and upon reaching the yard and seeing his men stretched on the grass preparing to sleep, the captain yelled: "Get up out of that, men, the place is full of powder. Every mother's son of you will be blown to bits if you don't move!"

As one man the prostrate group rose with yells of astonishment and consternation, and flew from the spot like frightened deer, hardly gaining the shelter of the woods when the explosion took place. Captain Henry, Jack Cobb and their prisoner being the last received a number of bruises from the falling fragments. The captain received a smart rap on the knuckles from a bit of falling stone, while pieces of mortar struck Cobb and Harry in their downward course.

"Secure the prisoner," said the captain, curtly, when he reached the spot in the woods where they intended to pass the remainder of the night, and then, moving to a convenient spot, he gloomily watched the progress of the fire which had deprived him and his band of their elegant quarters.

In accordance with his orders Harry was bound hand and foot and placed upon the ground like a billet of wood, where wearied in body and harassed in mind he fell into an uneasy sleep.

When he awoke it was broad daylight and the guerilla chief was bending over him.

As soon as he saw Harry was awake he demanded: "Where is the other feller? Unless you know something about him

he was probably blown up in the explosion!"

Harry was horror struck. He had thought all along that Arthur was again a prisoner of the guerillas, and the captain's query threw him into the greatest excitement and dismay. He would at that moment far rather have seen Arthur a prisoner than believe what the rebel chief had told him.

"Don't you know where he is?" he asked, anxiously.

"No," replied the captain. "That's what I just asked you."

"Well, we got separated in the cellar," replied Harry, too much disturbed to attempt to deceive the captain, "and he left me; that is the last I saw of him."

"I guess he met his just dues, then," said the captain, coolly. "It's likely that he only forestalled the action of the commander of this district. I wouldn't give much for the lives of those who did the damage here last night."

With this significant remark the guerilla left Harry a prey to the most painful reflections.

Aside from the uncertainty of Arthur's fate his own situation was perilous in the extreme.

He recalled the captain's remark concerning the workers of the destruction of the guerilla stronghold and shuddered. Still it was comforting to think that his life was not at the disposal of this lawless band, and indeed he was not so down hearted when he thought that he had considered all the probable dangers of his enterprise before he left the Dragon Fly.

What troubled him most was the disappearance of Arthur. He remembered now what had slipped his mind before—that he had neglected to tell Arthur the contents of the magazine-room, not dreaming they should again be separated.

For this Harry reproached himself severely. It was unintentional of course, but then Arthur might have found a means of escape, instead of using which he preferred to remain in the building to wait for Harry, thus placing himself unconsciously in the danger of being blown up.

All this and much more Harry thought over while lying on the ground in the midst of the guerilla camp, but however much he might ponder and reason, he could explain nothing satisfactorily that troubled him, so he wisely concluded to wait till they explained themselves.

As near as he could guess it was about nine o'clock when three horses were brought to the camp and tied to trees near by, by Jack Cobb.

A few minutes later he saw the guerilla chief and his lieutenant, Gilbert, engaged in earnest consultation, pointing now to the horses and then waving their hands toward the woods.

Gilbert listened attentively to what his superior said, occasionally nodding and pointing in various directions, as if to be sure he understood.

At length, as the conference ceased, the captain handed a large sealed envelope to him, while Gilbert called one of the guerillas that Harry afterward ascertained was Pete Bink.

Giving Pete an order he turned and walked up to one of the horses, patting it affectionately.

Pete calling another guerilla approached Harry, and cutting the fastenings from his ankles lifted him to his feet, while the other approached with one of the horses.

They placed Harry astride the animal, at the same time tying his hands before him instead of behind as they had been during the night. This was probably to render riding more easy for him, though he was at a loss to know why they took such pains to make him comfortable.

As soon as he was placed to their satisfaction, Gilbert and Bink sprang into their saddles and they rode off, each having a hold on Harry's bridle.

Their course held due south from the ruins of the stone house, and for about two miles their road led through the woods which surrounded the house.

After they reached a more open country they turned their horses' heads slightly to the southwest.

The few houses they passed were largely those of rebel sympathizers, who cheered lustily the guerillas and jeered the blue uniform.

"Humph!" said Harry to himself. "I thought the people through here were Unionists. They don't seem to be particularly struck with me, at any rate."

The slow trot of the horses was very tiresome and Harry asked "can't you go faster?"

The horses themselves were magnificent animals and they seemed to like the gait as little as did Harry, but Gilbert checked them every time they showed a disposition to increase their speed.

"They are going fast enough," was his reply to Harry.

"Where are we going?" asked Harry, hoping to get something out of one or the other.

"See here, Yank," said Gilbert, turning sharply around, "the less you open your jaw to me the better I'll be satisfied. You hear me?"

"I understand," said Harry. "Tell

me what I asked and I'll bother you no more."

But Gilbert rode on in silence, taking no notion of the last question, so Harry was compelled to be satisfied.

Failing in his efforts to gain some information, he began to find the journey grow very monotonous. It was now not more than twelve o'clock, and at the rate they had been moving they could hardly have made more than twelve miles, but had he known it the slow pace at which they moved became of the greatest service to him afterward.

It was probably between one and two o'clock in the afternoon when they came in sight of a long, low wooden building, set down in a shallow hollow.

It looked like a rebel barracks, but before it had been many minutes before his eyes Harry knew its present use was that of a prison.

His opportunity for observation was very small, as the lieutenant put spurs to the horses as soon as the prison came in sight, as if anxious to get through his duty after lingering so long on the road.

They rode up to the wooden palisade that surrounded the place and knocked on the gate for admittance. In a few minutes the gate was opened, and they were let into a dirty yard, where here and there a few prisoners were seen lying about under the eye of a guard, who carried a musket in the hollow of his arm.

Gilbert was received by a stout, red-nosed man in the uniform of a captain of the Confederate States of America, but before having any conversation a man was ordered to take Harry down and lock him up.

As Harry was disappearing he saw Gilbert pull the letter from his pocket and present it to the commander of the rebel prison.

Harry was led through a narrow hall to a stair-way leading to the cellar, into which he was ordered to proceed. He knew resistance was hopeless, and he descended the stairs, resolving to make an attempt to escape that very night, feeling if it was postponed he might never have another opportunity.

He was locked into a cell placed nearly in the center of the cellar, with no light, natural or artificial, nothing but four bare stone walls, relieved by the single door.

He felt around to see what the room contained, but if he expected to find anything he was disappointed. There was not even a shake-down on which to stretch himself.

With an exclamation of disgust he pulled off his jacket, and spreading it on

the floor threw himself upon it, and after tossing about some time fell into a sound sleep.

CHAPTER XII.

ARTHUR'S TRANSFORMATION.

When it is remembered that Arthur had passed the last two nights practically without sleep, it will be supposed that he was in poor condition for the labors of the day immediately succeeding the destruction of the guerilla stronghold.

After escaping so fortunately from the house he dared not lay down to sleep without placing himself in danger of being recaptured by the rebels, who were encamped within a stone's-throw of the place where he was hidden.

He could easily have stolen away in the darkness and slept in security till daylight, but by doing so there was every probability that Harry would be disposed of in some way before he could return.

After going carefully over the probabilities and possibilities of the case, Arthur decided it was better to risk something himself and be sure of Harry's whereabouts, than to leave the neighborhood and probably miss something that was of vital consequence for him to know.

As he had seen nothing of Harry he had some doubts as to whether he had gotten out of the burning building, but the rebels remained perfectly quiet after their scare, and he had to wait for positive information till morning.

As the gray light of dawn came slanting through the trees Arthur looked about for a position from which he could observe the movements in the camp without danger of detection.

That his observations were not interrupted was due to the fact that the guerillas believed he had perished in the explosion.

It was some time after the sun rose when he reached a little hillock, which at its tip reached the elevation of one hundred feet. It was about an eighth of a mile from the camp, which could be seen sufficiently plain for Arthur's purpose.

Choosing a sheltered spot he began his observations.

Notwithstanding the small opportunity given them for sleep that night, most of the guerillas were astir, and several fires just started indicated that they were about preparing their breakfast.

Arthur scanned the camp anxiously in hopes of catching a glimpse of Harry, but the distance was too great for him to distinguish the features of anybody there.

The sight of the fires and their evident purpose reminded him that he had tasted

nothing since six o'clock the evening before. Fortunately the guerillas had not thought it necessary to remove his haversack, in which there was stored, according to the captain of the Dragon Fly's orders, sufficient rations to see him through to the end of the expedition.

"I'll just eat my breakfast, too," he said to himself. "I don't know when I'll have more time."

His long fast made him eat heartily, though every few minutes he got up from the fallen tree on which he sat and carefully swept his eye over the camp, in order that no move of importance should be made there without his knowledge.

"If Harry had only come along with me instead of standing in that cellar to let himself be caught, we might be aboard the Dragon Fly by this time," he said, as he finished his meal.

Seating himself as comfortably as possible he watched the camp drowsily, occasionally turning his head in other directions as a precaution against surprise.

The minutes wore slowly by, and at nine o'clock he thought it must be nearly noon.

The horses being brought into camp about this time by Cobb had the effect of making him interested and attentive to what followed.

When a few minutes later Harry, whom he recognized by the blue uniform, was lifted upon one of the horses and two guerillas mounted the others, he began working his way toward the camp with as great speed and care as he could command. By the time he had made fifty feet the horses had started, and he immediately stopped to note the direction they took, which was almost at right angles from his.

"I wonder where they're taking him to," he muttered, as he dodged among the trees in pursuit. "I'll lose them, sure."

His prospects were not good for following on foot the horses of the guerilla band, which were said to be the best in the country.

He reached the edge of the woods some two miles from the little hillock before he again caught sight of the retreating trio. There he stopped, at the same time noticing the leading guerilla turn his horse's head a little to the southwest.

Arthur considered a few moments before making another move. It was madness, he thought, to attempt to follow them on foot, and there was not a house in sight where a horse might be procured. Even if he had a horse he could not follow them without being discovered.

He looked again at the horseman. They seemed to be moving very slowly;

at any rate they had not much increased the distance between him and them since he reached the edge of the woods.

"If that's all the faster they go I'll follow them as I am," he continued, and he waited till they got so far ahead that his pursuit would not be seen.

The country was a long, rolling swell, and on this account he was able to keep out of their sight nearly all the time. He would wait till they rode into the hollows and while they were out of sight he would move rapidly. When they reached the top of the swell Arthur was in the trough, so to speak.

When they passed a farm-house or through a little village he was compelled to make a detour, which in some cases made him lose considerable time.

Still the route of the guerillas was so direct that he had no difficulty in keeping on their track.

It was about noon when he passed by a small house around which he had to make a circuit, when he saw a youth of about his own age working in a field not far from a little belt of timber through which our hero was passing.

As Arthur looked at him an idea came into his head, and he hastened on, muttering:

"Just you stay there about two hours longer and you won't be the same looking fellow you are now, neither will I."

He pushed rapidly on, as he was nearly a mile behind, and he did not know what minute the guerillas might change their course.

Stopping a moment to take a drink at a little brook that ran through the belt, he hurried on, unslinging his knapsack as he went.

The great tax on his powers of endurance made him desperately hungry, and it is doubtful, at the rate he ate on this day, whether his rations would last the required time.

It was shortly after one o'clock when he caught up with the guerillas and their prisoner, and he just arrived at the top of a swell in time to see them leave it at the gate of the prison.

He dropped on the grass at once and surveyed the place minutely.

"So that's the place they've got him. Whew! what a journey they've led me." And assuring himself he could find his way back to the place, he turned about and started rapidly back in the direction from which he came.

"There's no time to be lost," he said to himself. "He's got to get out of there right away or not at all."

Arthur's anxiety was usually expressed in few words, and he was thoroughly anxious now.

He had resolved upon a plan of action that would be the means of Harry's escape or the placing himself in the same condition as Harry was now.

If his plan failed he did not doubt that the rebels would dispose of them at once to prevent them making more disturbance and trouble.

The four or five miles back to the belt of timber were accomplished in a little more than an hour, and he was greatly delighted upon reaching it to find the young rustic still at work in the field close by.

Arthur approached as near to him as he could without being discovered, and then stopped to consider how best his plan could be carried out.

If he walked boldly from his place of concealment the fellow might take fright at his uniform, or if not he would have time to prepare for fight, and this was something in which Arthur did not care to take any unnecessary risk.

At length he concluded to decoy him into the trees, where if a serious fight did come off it would not be in sight of any prying eyes.

Raising his voice Arthur called out, "Hey, there!"

The young rustic straightened himself up and looked around in every direction.

In a moment the call was repeated, and he turned his gaze to the patch of woods.

"Come over here, pard. I want to talk to you," came the voice again.

"Whar air you? Why don't you show yourself?" demanded the youth, guardedly.

"I dassent walk in the hot sun," was Arthur's reply.

"What you want wi' me?" demanded the rustic again.

"Come over here an' see. You won't be sorry, neither," answered Arthur.

Stimulated by curiosity the youth dropped his hoe, and came slowly toward the trees.

"Tarnation!" he exclaimed, as Arthur suddenly stepped in front of him. "Whar did you come from?"

"I want to make a trade with you," began Arthur, ignoring the question, and proceeding directly to his business. "I'll trade you my clothes for yours, even. What do you say?"

The young farmer stepped back and looked Arthur over from head to foot. A light seemed to break upon his understanding as the blue uniform impressed itself upon him.

"Say," he said, looking up suddenly, "air you a Yank?"

"No matter what I am," answered Arthur, impatiently. "Hurry up. Yes or no."

But the rustic drew back.

"Yes, you air a mean, sneakin' Yank. Yip!" and before Arthur could lift his arm the young Confederate sprung at him and knocked him down.

With another yell he sprung upon Arthur to complete his conquest, but was a moment too late.

Arthur had risen upon one knee almost the instant he touched the ground, and as the young farmer sprung upon him he warded off the blow aimed at his head, but the violence of it knocked him back again, while his antagonist went sprawling over his head in his eagerness.

This put them on equal terms, and Arthur, believing he could end the fight quicker on his feet, sprung up. The other immediately did the same, but before he was fairly on his feet one of Arthur's terrific right-handers stretched him out on the ground, while his conqueror, pulling out a revolver, said firmly:

"Now, get up and turn your head away from me, and get out of that coat and trousers as quick as you know how."

The revolver had a most wholesome effect on the spirits of the young Confederate, and doing as bidden he divested himself of his garments in a very short space of time.

When he turned around according to an order he saw that Arthur had also taken off his outer garments.

"Here," said the latter, "take these and put them on, and be quick about it."

In a few moments the two were entirely transformed—Arthur into an evil-looking guerilla, and the other into a fairly-decent United States marine.

"Now, back up there against that tree," was Arthur's next command, and he proceeded to tie his prisoner to it, notwithstanding the latter's remonstrance.

Remembering their mistake of the night before, he securely gagged his prisoner, and satisfying himself that the youth would be in no danger, he made ready to leave the place, as it was considerably after three o'clock.

CHAPTER XIII.

HARRY'S RUSE.

It was about seven o'clock when the red nosed officer who had received Gilbert and his prisoner that afternoon, walked leisurely into the box-like apartment near the gate, that answered for his office, and threw himself into the chair before a small desk.

It was already twilight and the office was lighted by a small lantern which hung from the ceiling. The officer had just returned from placing the sentinels

about the prison, and he looked longingly toward a large bottle that stood on the desk, as if only awaiting the moment when he could enjoy its contents.

He was about to take a nap in his chair when a call at the gate attracted his attention.

"Who's there now?" he muttered. "I don't want any more prisoners brought here to-night."

A few minutes later a man entered the office.

"Ah, Henry, how are you?" said the officer, rising and taking the other's hand. "I didn't expect you here. Anything wrong?"

"Nothing later than what Gilbert brought you this afternoon," repeated the other. "I suppose you have the prisoner safe?" he asked, abruptly.

The guerilla leader might have received more satisfaction if he had put his question differently. Nothing provoked the commander of the prison more than to be asked if his prisoners were safe. During the short existence of the prison no prisoner had ever yet escaped its walls; consequently he said, curtly, "did you ever know any to get away after they were once here? You needn't disturb yourself about him."

"Have you any place to put me overnight?" Henry asked, changing the subject.

"I guess I can find you some place if you want to stay," replied the other.

He was thoroughly angry now, for he imputed the guerilla captain's motive in coming to the prison was to be sure that his prisoner was safe.

"He must think I don't know how to take care of his pesky prisoners," muttered the officer, angrily, as he walked out to give the necessary orders.

He returned in a few minutes with a guard who was to stable the captain's horse.

"Our accommodations are not very good but you'll have to put up with them," he said, as Henry left the office with the guard.

It was hardly five minutes after the guerilla captain left the room when another loud call and knock was heard at the gate.

"Who can that be?" growled the officer, starting up and going to the door.

He saw the gate open and one of the guards question the new-comer.

At length the man approached, and touching his cap respectfully, said there was a country fellow that wanted to speak to him.

"What does he want?" demanded the officer of the prison

"He won't tell us but wants to see you," replied the guard.

"Well, send him in," said the commandant, going into his office again.

In the course of a few minutes the new comer appeared at the door escorted by two of the guards.

He wore an old brown suit that looked as if it had seen hard service in the fields, and his whole appearance was of the style that is commonly denoted hang-dog.

An old slouch hat pulled low over his brow left nothing but the lower part of his face visible.

As far as the captain of the prison could judge, he appeared to be about twenty years old.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" asked the officer, sharply.

The stranger raised his head an instant and cast a meaning glance upon the two guards, who were still standing, interested to know what the new-comer wanted in the prison.

The officer understood the motion. "Leave the room," he commanded.

"Now," he continued, turning to the stranger, "tell me what you want, for I have no time to waste."

"I want to get attached to this yere prison," replied the other. "I'm a handy feller to have around an' I thought you'd like to have some feller ter black yer boots an' things around."

"What was the use of making such a secret of a thing like that?" demanded the officer, sharply.

"Cause I thought you wouldn't want the soldiers to think you wasn't payin' fer yer things, an' I am willin' to do 'em fer nothin'."

"Bright fellow, you," sneered the commandant. "Don't you suppose if I wanted any such things done I could ask the men to do it, without one of them daring to refuse?"

"You better take me, cap'n," persisted the other. "They ain't one on 'em as kin do your errands as good as I kin."

"I didn't say I wouldn't have you," interrupted the captain. "You can make yourself useful, I guess. There—take those four muskets in the corner and put 'em into shape, till I see what you can do."

The stranger mumbled thanks as he turned to the muskets.

When he reached the corner he pushed his slouch hat back for a moment. Any one who had ever seen him before would have recognized him as our old friend, Arthur Linden, though they might well doubt his identity upon casting a glance upon his clothing.

He breathed a deep sigh of relief as he

pulled his hat down again over his eyes. One of the hardest stages of the adventure in which he was enlisted was to get inside the prison, and after it was over he was astonished to find how easy it had been. He would trust to Providence and his own resources to get out with Harry, now that he was in.

He was in a quandary as to the method to be used in ascertaining the situation of Harry's place of confinement, and he thought rapidly while he polished up the dingy barrels of the muskets.

Suddenly a bright thought struck him.

"Cap'n," he said, without turning or raising his head, "I saw a Yank this artemoon."

"You did?" asked the commandant, looking up from the desk at which he was writing.

"Yes, an' two sogers had him tied on a hoss. They passed clost to my pap's place."

"Humph!" said the commandant. "That fellow's safe down-stairs, now; but what's your name, and who's your 'pap'?"

This question threw Arthur into some alarm. For all he knew the officer might know all the people within miles around, and if such was the case he would instantly detect any false statement as to name.

However, after an instant's hesitation he answered:

"I'm Jake Reid, an' I live 'bout twelve miles from here."

"You must be near Henry's headquarters, then?" said the captain, laying down his pen.

Arthur would just as willingly not heard his name, but he answered with as much indifference as he could:

"Yes, Cap Henry ain't fur from us."

"Why didn't you join him instead of coming 'way over here?" asked the officer.

"Cause I heerd he wasn't the man you was," replied Arthur, venturing upon a little bit of flattery.

Before the officer could make any reply a footstep sounded outside, and presently a man stood in the door-way.

"Good-night, Adams," he said, "I am going to bed. It's a little early, but I didn't get much sleep last night."

"Good-night," growled Adams, as the man left the door.

Arthur, however, dropped his rag as if petrified with surprise. He knew that voice to belong to the leader of the guerrillas, the man whom he wished to avoid of all others. He alone of the inmates of the prison might be able to penetrate his disguise, and if he did Arthur did not like to think of what would follow.

What brought him here was the next

question that presented itself to Arthur. He was the horseman, then, that he had seen ride up to the gate, only a few minutes before he himself came in, but for what he could only conjecture.

He recovered himself as quickly as possible, infinitely glad that Adams had not noticed his confusion.

One thing more he had learned was that Harry was down stairs somewhere, and he concluded that the principal prisoners were kept in the cellar.

He was interrupted here by the voice of the officer, who said:

"That was Henry. I suppose you know him?"

"It were?" replied Arthur, striving to appear indifferent. "I didn't see 'im; my back was to 'im. I guess that prisoner was ketched by his fellers," he continued, endeavoring to get the officer started on the subject of his latest capture.

"Yes, he was caught over there somewhere," answered the officer carelessly, resuming his writing.

"I wonder if he's the feller General R— sent out a special order 'bout? The one as ketches him or brings him to the general gets a com—m, comm— what you call 'em?"

"What's that you're saying?" and suddenly becoming interested Commandant Adams again laid down his pen.

Arthur repeated his statement, careful not to contradict himself.

"If I thought he was the fellow I'd take him to headquarters to-night, yet I've sent no report," muttered the officer.

"I wasn't close this afternoon w'en I see this feller, but they was 'most the same size, an' mebbe you have 'im right in yer hands."

"What do you know about their size?" demanded the commandant.

"Oh, I seed the feller the general's arter a couple o' months ago, over in Tennessee, knock down a parcel of our sogers as if they wasn't nothin', an' git away from em without any trouble 'tall. He's a fast one, I can tell you."

Arthur spoke indifferently, as if nothing interested him less than this "Yank," that he was talking so glibly about.

"Can you identify him if you were to see him now?" asked the commandant in excitement.

"I ought to, 'cause he nearly knocked a hole in my head the time I was tellin' you 'bout," answered Arthur.

"I know now what that robber Henry wanted here to-night," muttered the commandant angrily to himself. "But I'll show him that he can't get ahead of me," and reaching up he took the lantern down from its hook and called upon Arthur to follow him

Putting his hands to his pockets and finding his weapons where they could immediately be brought to service, he rose from his corner and started after the commandant, who had already left the office.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ESCAPE.

They crossed the yard quickly, and the guards, who seemed quite numerous, paid no attention to Arthur as he was accompanying their officer.

"I'm glad that old guerilla has gone to bed," thought Arthur to himself, as they entered the hall. "If he'd have been around much where I was I wouldn't have stood much show for getting through this business."

The commandant said nothing till he reached the stair-way leading to the cellar, then he said:

"You are sure you know that fellow the general is after?"

Arthur stoutly asserted that he did, mentally calling the officer a fool to take his word for authority as to what orders the Confederate general had issued. Still it was so much the better as it was, or neither of our heroes would ever have seen his Northern home again.

The commandant opened several cells before he reached the right one, but at last he perceived a form lying on the floor in the fourth after he had opened three vacant ones.

Harry started up as his two visitors entered the apartment, looked sharply at them for a moment, then sitting down he looked sullenly at the floor while the commandant let the light of the lantern fall upon him, at the same time turning to Arthur with a look of inquiry on his face.

"Set the lantern on the floor an' turn his face up so 't I can see," said Arthur, in a hoarse, unnatural voice.

He hoped that it would not be recognized, for he feared that Harry might be so surprised as to attract the Confederate's attention.

Notwithstanding his precaution, Harry started slightly, and raising his eyes cast a penetrating glance upon the speaker.

To Arthur's relief the Confederate seemed to attribute Harry's agitation to the supposition that he was about to be identified as the noted spy for whose apprehension the general was so anxious.

He approached, therefore, and just as he put his hand under Harry's chin the muzzle of a revolver was thrust against his head, and Arthur's voice rung in his ear. "Move a muscle and I'll blow your brains out."

The commandant, however, disregarded the order.

Springing back he opened his mouth to give a shout that would have aroused the whole post, but Harry had sprung up and seized him by the throat in the nick of time.

Arthur in the meantime tore a piece of his tattered brown coat off and thrust as much of it as he could into the officer's mouth, as the best and safest means of keeping him quiet.

"Now, Harry, get something to tie him up with. This is our last chance. If we lose we are goners."

While Arthur was speaking he was tearing the Confederate uniform off of the officer as fast as he could, and by the time Harry had that worthy bound it was lying on the floor.

"Get out of that U. S. N. now, Harry, and into this thing," he said, speaking rapidly and pointing to the pile of clothes on the floor.

It took Harry less than two minutes to dress himself out in the rebel's uniform and announce himself ready to proceed.

Arthur picked up the lantern, saying: "Remember now, you are the commandant and general boss of this establishment; your name is Adams. Don't say a word unless you must or you will be detected. I am your serving-man. Come on."

Arthur led the way up-stairs, and when he reached the door which opened into the yard he turned and whispered to Harry: "You take the lead now, and walk along as if you owned the place. Make straight for the gate."

Nearly all the guards had disappeared when they stepped into the yard, and they reached the gate without molestation.

"The cap'n says you shall leave the gate open for him. He'll be back soon," called Arthur to the nearest guard, as they stepped out the gate.

An exclamation of astonishment burst from one of the men, and Captain Henry's voice was heard shouting: "Follow them, men; there's something wrong there."

"Run! run! Harry, that's Henry, and he recognized my voice," whispered Arthur, bounding forward.

The bustle and commotion increased within the prison, and in a few moments two horsemen appeared at the gate.

They were amply provided with weapons—Arthur with those of the guerilla chief, and Harry with those of the officer of the prison.

They started due east, hoping to reach the river before daylight, and work their way up to where the Dragon Fly lay.

They had not proceeded any distance before they heard the report of a musket and a ball whistle close above their heads.

The clatter of hoofs sounded close behind, and if there had been any number of pursuers they would undoubtedly have been recaptured.

"We must stop them, Harry," cried Arthur, drawing his revolver. "You take the right-hand one and I'll take the left."

All four fired almost at the same moment, and Harry felt a sharp pain in his arm as he saw the rebel at whom he fired throw up his hands and drop from the saddle.

The horse of the other carried him almost up to Arthur, who was nearly run down.

Neither of these had done any damage by their shots, and Arthur caught his pursuer by the throat, dragging him out of the saddle.

"Now, Johnny Reb, I'll give you five to leave," cried Arthur. "One, two, three, four, five," and he covered the man with his revolver till he had disappeared.

Then he turned to Harry.

"Where's the other horse?" he asked quickly.

"He ran off when the rebel dropped off of him," replied Harry, speaking as if in great pain.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Arthur in alarm.

"I guess that fellow hit me in the arm; but never mind, we haven't time to bother about it now," answered Harry.

"Well, jump on behind me, and we'll make this horse take us to the river," said Arthur, looking back, expecting to see more pursuers.

He assisted Harry on the horse, and then sprang up himself, saying:

"As soon as we get to a safe place we'll stop, and I'll look at your arm."

Harry found the riding motion so painful that after bearing it about an hour he declared he could stand it no longer.

Arthur at once dismounted, and tying the horse to the tree under which they stopped, he lit the lantern, which they still had with them, and examined the wound.

Fortunately it was inflicted by a small ball in the fleshy part of the arm, consequently no bone was touched, but it was very painful, and there was nothing with which to bind it up.

Arthur hesitated to take the dirty cloth which composed his impromptu suit, fearing that it would do more harm than good. Finally he cut a strip from the uniform that Harry wore, and bound it as carefully as possible to prevent cold settling in it.

Then they remounted, Arthur putting the horse on a walk, so as to make the pace as easy as possible.

Their progress in this manner was necessarily slow, and they put in the time by telling each other all that befell them during the time they were separated, and it was midnight before they halted in a little belt of trees within sight of the river.

After looking carefully over the spot and making sure that they were its only occupants, Arthur decided that they should pass the rest of the night there and then start up the river in the morning.

It was their first opportunity for sleep for two nights, and Arthur fell asleep almost immediately upon lying down, but Harry could not, owing to the pain in his arm.

CHAPTER XV.

BACK TO THE GUN-BOAT.

The sun was just rising when Arthur sprang up, feeling very hungry, and he only then remembered that they had nothing to eat.

They consoled themselves with the reflection that if all went well it would not be long till they were amply supplied, and then they began to lay their plans for the day's operations.

Arthur began to be seriously alarmed at the state of Harry's arm, which was very much swelled and so stiff that he could not raise it.

While they were considering the question as to what was best for them to do, Arthur constructed a rude sling and placed Harry's arm in it.

"I tell you what, Harry, I want to get you to the surgeon before many more hours go by," he said, as he completed his work.

"We're ten miles from the Dragon Fly," groaned Harry, "and it'll kill me to go that distance."

But Arthur was firm, and accordingly they made preparations to resume the journey.

He had fixed Harry as comfortably as possible in the saddle, while he himself intended to lead the horse, in the hope that by doing thus he would save Harry any jolts and give him a more comfortable seat.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning when they reached a bend in the river that seemed familiar.

"The Dragon Fly has often been down here," said Arthur, in some excitement. "That must be her smoke above there."

In about ten minutes they saw the little

vessel in the middle of the river, about half a mile further on.

In the course of ten minutes more he made the signal by which they were to be recognized on board.

By the commotion which immediately followed he knew it had been seen, and directly a boat put off and headed toward them.

Arthur meanwhile lifted Harry from the saddle and helped him down to the water's edge just as three rousing cheers from the boat's crew greeted them.

He replied with a will and even Harry caught the spirit of the moment and chimed in.

When it was ascertained in the boat that Harry was wounded there were anxious inquiries, as he was a prime favorite with all connected with the Dragon Fly.

He was helped carefully into the boat, where Arthur said he was able to speak for himself.

A few minutes later the captain received them on the Dragon Fly, but seeing Harry was wounded ordered him to the surgeon at once.

Then turning to Arthur, he said: "You may report to me in an hour, or just as soon as Phillips' arm has received proper attention."

When Harry made his appearance it was in a brand-new uniform, and his wound, properly dressed, felt vastly better.

Arthur at once went to prepare for his audience with the captain, and our two friends looked very different when they went to the cabin than when they came aboard a little while before.

As Harry was so much brighter Arthur stood back, as he always did, and let his friend relate to the captain what had occurred and the success of their enterprise.

"But," said Harry, as he finished, "though I originated the plan in the first place, it is due to my friend here," indicating Arthur, "that it has succeeded. If it hadn't been for him I would probably now be hanging in a—"

"It's no such a thing, captain," interrupted Arthur, quickly. "Excuse me for speaking as I did, but I might say, while we are talking of obligations, that if Harry had not been along I also would be hanging somewhere, for I was accused of being a spy, too."

"Well, well, never mind," said the captain, with a smile. "You have both done excellent service, and you have my hearty thanks for it. I hope soon to be able to announce to you," tapping some papers, "something of more consequence than mere thanks. That is all now."

THE END.

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